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THE
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THE LOCAL COLOUR OF THE BIBLE

BY

CHARLES W. BUDDEN, M.D.

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1 KINGS—MALACHI

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THE LOCAL COLOUR OF THE BIBLE.

KINGS AND CHRONICLES.

THE BEGINNING OF SOLOMON'S REIGN.

(1 Kings i. 1–iv. 34.)

The Books of Kings.

The two Books of Kings contain brief summaries of the reigns of all the kings of Judah and Israel, the material for which is acknowledged in the text to have been taken from "The Chronicles of the Kings of Israel" and "The Chronicles of the Kings of Judah." The period covered is roughly 400 years, *i.e.* from the accession of Solomon to the fall of the Southern Kingdom of Judah, *circa* 586 B.C.; but as the Hebrews possessed no era from which they could number their years it follows that they can never offer a date which refers to any fixed standard, and this has been the cause of the chronological difficulty in dealing with these books. In 1 Kings 6[1] the foundation of Solomon's Temple is assigned to the 480th year from the time of the Exodus from Egypt, but no other event in the

history is referred to the Exodus, while in the subsequent records of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel a very cumbersome system is introduced whereby the reigns of the kings of the Southern Kingdom are synchronized with the reigns of the kings of the Northern State. Accessions of the kings of Judah are dated by the regnal years of kings of Israel and accessions of the kings of Israel are dated by reference to the kings of Judah. Fortunately contemporary history furnishes information by which the Hebrew writers can be checked, and from the Assyrian monuments in particular valuable data have been obtained among which the following may be quoted :

Payment of tribute by Jehu to Assyria, 842 B.C.
Menahem pays tribute to Assyria, 738 B.C.
Damascus besieged by Assyria, 733 B.C.
Assyrians conquer Samaria, 722 B.C.
Tribute paid to Assyria by Hezekiah, 701 B.C.
Fall of Nineveh, 606 B.C.
Fall of Jerusalem, 586 B.C.

Much of the history given in Kings is secular, but though battle and revolution are recorded they are included always with a definite religious purpose. Like the Books of Samuel, Kings is written from the Deuteronomic standpoint, which means that throughout the Books a moral lesson is to be enforced. Among these lessons stands pre-eminently that of the necessity of faithfulness to the One God, Yahweh, who is specially the God of Israel, but also God of all the earth. This

can be best preserved, the author teaches, by fidelity to the one sanctuary, the Temple built by Divine purpose at Jerusalem (1 Kings 5^{5} 12^{27-30} 14^{23} 15^{14}).

With regard to religious observances the value of sacrifice is assumed (1 Kings $8^{62.\ 63}$), but the value of prayer is enforced (9^{3-5} 17^{19-22}, 2 Kings 4^{33-35} 13^{4} 19^{4}). Further, it may be said that the germ of sacramental teaching is to be found in the Books of Kings. Naaman is healed by the use of the water of Jordan (2 Kings 5^{10-14}). "No magical power is attributed to the water, but to wash in Jordan is the Divinely appointed means of recovery, and the bathing is an effectual sign of the cleansing which accompanied it. Naaman learnt to know the God of Israel through an act of faith and obedience." (Barnes.)

This attitude to Yahweh shows a very considerable advance upon the earlier passages in the Books of Samuel.

It is important, too, to notice the references to the high places which immediately follow the author's judgment upon the Kings. The treatment of these high places appears to be the standard by which each monarch is judged. Hezekiah and Josiah are classed with David in excellence simply because they removed these local sanctuaries. Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoash, Amaziah, Uzziah, and Jotham are all commended on account of the reforms they effected in the Temple, but the praise is tempered with the statement that the high places were not put away; while in the case of the remaining kings of Judah, and all the kings of

Israel, the great sin of bull-worship affords pretext for absolute condemnation. The legitimate sanctuary of Yahweh was at Jerusalem, and in the eyes of the Deuteronomic writer no crime was more heinous than rebellion against this principle.

During the four centuries covered by the Books of Kings the people of Israel lived the greatest part of their consolidated national life as an independent state, that is, from the time when David left the warlike tribes welded into a powerful empire till the two kingdoms into which it became divided were swept away and Palestine became a province of the great Eastern Empire. During this period the house of David enjoyed an unbroken dynasty with a series of twenty-one kings, whereas in the Northern Kingdom there were nineteen kings but nine different dynasties.

During the 400 years thus covered the Hebrews made no great conquests, built up no world empire, left no great monuments or works of art. Yet the history of the world has been powerfully controlled by Israel's religion, for during these four centuries there was a succession of those prophetic men who, "joining hands over the centuries, proclaimed the principles on which the nation was constituted, bequeathed to posterity those writings which perpetuated their teaching, and moulded into compactness a nation, which, at a later time, chastened by exile, and made conscious of its high calling, was again scattered over the face of the earth, bearing living witness to the trust committed to it, and sowing the seeds of a truth which has sprung

up into a harvest of blessing to the whole world." (Robertson.)

Dreams.

Belief in dreams and their portent has always been particularly strong in the East, and Bedawîn Arabs will shape the whole course of a day's duties by the directions indicated in a dream. They will also recount it in all its details without the slightest regard for the effect it may have upon the listeners; the latter may occupy a position of inferiority in the narrative to which it is distinctly unpleasant for them to listen, but a dream is a dream, and no feeling will alter it, or change the course of events flowing from it. Thus the recital of Joseph's dreams (Gen. $37^{6ff.}$) places him in an unfavourable light, but it is true to Oriental nature. Had the dream been in his disfavour, he would still have recounted it without hesitation. Moreover, a dream may be a warning, and to be forewarned is to be forearmed, so that all who hear through a dream of the part they are going to take can have a chance of escape. In fact most misfortunes are traced back by the Arabs to some night vision, in the belief that the indications it contained had been neglected.

The modern Egyptians place great faith in dreams, and they have two large and celebrated works on their interpretation, which are consulted, even by the learned, with implicit confidence. When one person says to another, "I have seen a dream," the latter usually replies, "Good," *i.e.* may it be of good omen,

or "Good, please God." When a person has had an evil dream, it is customary for him to say, "O God, bless our lord Mohammed," and to spit over his left shoulder three times to prevent an evil result.

The reason of the importance thus attached to dreams is found in the fact that all primitive people have regarded sleep as a particular mystery. Thus in the lower stages of culture all dreams were regarded as actual visitations of the deity or spirit, and the events in the dream were believed to be real occurrences. Hence any one who was subject to frequent dreaming was looked upon as a special medium of the Divine energy, and many, therefore, sought to procure the state by such artificial means as fasting or the taking of drugs, and they further encouraged the phenomenon by sleeping in sacred places such as groves, grottos, and temples. That the Hebrew writers regarded dreams as genuine communications from God in certain cases is seen in such passages as Job $33^{14.15}$:

> "For God speaketh once,
> Yea twice, though man regardeth it not,
> In a dream, in a vision of the night,"

and in Gen. 20^{3} and $31^{10ff.}$, where God spoke to Abimelech and Jacob in dreams. At the same time the idea that a dream is necessarily a Divine inspiration is stoutly combated by several of the prophets. "Hearken ye not to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreams," cried Jeremiah in 27^{9} and again in 29^{8}; and the fact that precautions must be taken

against false dreamers is emphasized in such passages as Zech. 10^2 and Eccl. 5^7.

To-day the interest in dreams has been revived by the medical profession, who seek to interpret them with a view to the curing of nervous disorders. It is suggested that dreams are symbolic, and that, if they are carefully analyzed, they will reveal hidden complexes which are now regarded as responsible for so many morbid mental conditions. Consequently a whole code of symbols has been invented, and patients are encouraged by psycho-analysts to remember and relate their dreams that these may be investigated by the new methods. A certain degree of success has been claimed by the exponents of this system of treatment, and it is to be remarked that they do not hesitate to tackle dream problems far more intricate than those offered to Joseph in Egypt.

NOTE.

1 Kings 4^{33} "*The hyssop that springeth out of the wall.*"—A small plant greatly used in ceremonial sprinklings. It was believed to have cleansing properties in skin diseases. For its several uses see Exod. 12^{22}, Lev. $14^{4.\ 6.\ 51}$, Num. $19^{6.\ 18}$.

THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE.

(1 Kings v. 1–ix. 9.)

Solomon's Temple.

Before his death David had completed the plans and preparations for a permanent Temple at Jerusalem

which should provide a more worthy dwelling-place for the Ark of God than that of the Tabernacle-tent. "That David should have left 'plans' of the future Temple buildings behind him," writes Professor Sayce, 'may seem too modern an idea to many readers, but it is borne out by the archæological fact. Such plans were made in Egypt and Babylonia centuries before the days of David, and some of them have survived to our own time. The profession of the architect is immensely old in the civilized East."

The governing idea of these plans was to reproduce in costlier and less perishable materials the Tabernacle-tent of Moses. Thus cedar was to be employed instead of acacia, and gold was to take the place of brass. But no change was to be made in either the outline or the measures in the construction of the Temple. It was left, therefore, to Solomon to erect for the Deity a permanent dwelling-place which would be the copy, in wood and stone, of the earlier Sanctuary-tent of Israel.

The site fixed upon for the Temple was the eastern hill in Jerusalem called Mount Sion or Mount Moriah, and, in particular, that portion of the hill which is now occupied by the gigantic platform, covering an area of 35 acres, known as the Haram esh-Sharif or "noble sanctuary." In this immense court, which is paved with white flagstones, with grass growing between them as in a cemetery, rises the blue dome of the Mosque of Omar. This mosque holds within its walls the sacred rock (es-Sakra), which has all the appearance of

having once been used as an altar. If this rock, then, represents the Altar of Burnt-offering, the Temple must be placed immediately to the west of es-Sakra.

Solomon's Temple lay east and west, a massive oblong building, 124 feet in length by 55 in breadth, and with a porch in front facing the east. Round the other three sides there were chambers for storage purposes arranged in three storeys. The inner space of the building was divided by a wall into two parts. The outer of these parts was called the "hekal," or *Holy Place*. The measurements here were 70 feet from east to west, 34½ from north to south, and the height 52 feet. The inner apartment, the "debir," or *Holy of Holies*, was a cube of 34½ feet. In all probability the roof of the Temple was not the usual flat one of Oriental houses, but a gabled roof of cedar wood, thus carrying out in this particular also the representation of a tent. Cedar wood, richly carved, was employed in the panelling of the two chambers, and the floors were of cypress wood.

The entrance to the Temple was by a large folding-door of cypress wood in the *Porch* on the eastern front. Immediately before the porch stood two bronze *Pillars*, that on the right called Jachin and that on the left Boaz. The sacred pillar had long been a familiar feature of Semitic sanctuaries, and Solomon's architects would work them into their scheme of construction as a matter of course.

The Holy of Holies was separated from the Holy Place, as has been said, by a wall, in which a door of

olive wood was set. There seems also to have been a curtain, or *Veil*, before this partition—the veil which was rent from the top to the bottom at our Lord's death. The door of the Most Holy Place opened outwards so that the veil, which was woven in a single piece, had to be lifted when the High Priest entered to make atonement for himself and the people. The chamber into which he entered was absolutely dark, save perhaps for the dim light of a lamp. It contained only one object, the *Ark* (see art. THE ARK OF THE COVENANT, vol. i. p. 326), a small chest of acacia wood facing the entrance, and overshadowed by two cherubim figures in olive wood overlaid with gold, the spread of whose outstretched wings was twice the length of the ark itself, thus fulfilling the injunction "the cherubim shall spread out their wings on high, covering the mercy-seat with their wings" (Exod. 25^{20}). The *Mercy-seat* was the name given to the lid, or cover, which rested upon the top of the ark.

It is not certain that there was any article of furniture in the Holy Place except an altar-shaped table, which stood before the entrance to the inner shrine and held the offering of *Holy bread*. The *Lampstands* (candlesticks), of which five stood on each side of the Holy Place, were probably a later addition.

Round the Temple extended what was known as the Inner Court, with the greater part of its space on the eastern side of the Temple. It was there that the *Altar of Burnt-offering* stood. "In the description of Solomon's Temple," says Sir George Adam Smith,

" there is no word of his having constructed an altar. Though in other parts of his history *a bronze altar before Yahweh* is mentioned, the probability is that this was a subsequent invention, and that Solomon, at least at first, simply used the bare Rock es-Sakra for his sacrifices. In a later reign we find a *bronze altar* in the forecourt of the Temple, but this also may have been constructed on the same Rock, the surface of which is sufficient for its stated dimensions. Between the Altar of Burnt-offering and the Temple, but to the south-east of the latter, stood the *Bronze Sea*, a huge cast-bronze tank, some 17 feet in diameter, supported on the backs of twelve Bronze Bulls, facing by threes to the four quarters of heaven. It is difficult to think that such a construction was meant for use only as a laver ; and the plausible suggestion has been made that it embodied certain ideas which prevailed in the Babylonian and Canaanite religions, and, as various parts of the Old Testament prove, influenced at some time or other the religion of Israel. According to this theory *The Sea* was the symbol of the Great Deep, the primeval chaos subjugated (according to the Babylonians) by Marduk, whose symbol was the Bull, at this time a frequent image of deity also throughout Canaan and even within Israel. How much of this symbolism the Israelites of Solomon's day recognized in the Bronze Sea with its twelve Bulls facing the four quarters of heaven is, of course, quite uncertain ; but that the whole was associated with Babylonian notions is rendered probable by the fact that, under the later

and more exclusive monotheism, the Bronze Sea is either ignored, or studiously explained as a mere laver, or replaced by a laver."

In addition to the Bronze Sea there were ten *Lavers* of bronze which rested upon wheeled carriers. These were smaller editions of the Bronze Sea, containing about 325 gallons, while the Sea held more than 16,000 gallons. In this forecourt, then, with its appointments as already described, the people gathered for the worship of God, before whose sacred dwelling-place the sacrifices of king and nation were performed.

Seven years and six months was the time occupied in the building of the Temple. It endured for three centuries and a half, when it was pillaged and subsequently burned to the ground by the troops of Nebuchadrezzar in 587–586 B.C.

Hebrew Building and Masonry.

The Hebrews never developed the art or science of architecture, and when they entered Canaan they appear to have copied the types of buildings in use there, so that their houses exhibit exactly the same features as general domestic architecture of the Middle East. For their more important buildings, such as the Temple and the royal palaces, they employed the Phœnician architect and workman. Consequently the tools of the Hebrew mason were few and simple. A measuring reed and plumb-line served him for his fundamental measurements, while for the rest he depended, for

the most part, upon crude forms of axe, saw, and hammer.

In erecting a building the first step was to dig out the space required for the foundation; and, owing to the shrinkage and expansion of the ground by the long summer drought and the semi-tropical rains of autumn and spring, this occasioned some difficulty. As a rule an endeavour was made to reach the rock in order that the building might stand the onslaught of the weather, and where this was not done it was no uncommon experience for a tenant to find his home literally melt over his head and be washed away by the floods (Mt. 7^{24-27}). The expense of reaching the rock might be very considerable, and failure in the enterprise might lead to public opprobrium, as in the case instanced in Luke $14^{28.\ 29}$. The method of working now in vogue is probably unchanged from Bible times. It consists in the digging of deep broad trenches until the rock is reached, and the filling of these with stone and lime. This done, the work is left for a while that the cement may harden, and the possibility of another builder stealing the foundations thus made by using them for his own building is evidenced by the reference in Rom. 15^{20} and 1 Cor. 3^{10}.

The day of the laying of the foundation-stone was an occasion of great rejoicing (2 Chron. 8^{16}, Job $38^{6.\ 7}$, Ezra 3^{11}). It consisted in the placing of a "corner stone of sure foundation" at each corner where two walls met (cf. Is. 28^{16}, Ps. 118^{22}, Mt. 21^{42}), and the stone had to be broad and strong. Size of stone was

much thought of. Phœnician builders particularly loved to make a great show with huge blocks of stone. Thus an ancient wall at Arvad in northern Phœnicia is composed of stones 10 feet high and from 12 to 16 feet long; at Baalbek the three stones which crown the platform of the Temple of the Sun are each over 60 feet in length; and Josephus, speaking of the wall of Herod's Temple, states that stones of the size of 40 cubits were used.

In 1 Kings 16^{34} there is a reference which is generally considered to imply the custom of immolating a human victim at the ceremony of the laying of the foundation-stone and burying the body in the foundation of the building. Recent excavations in Palestine have shown that this was done by both Canaanites and Hebrews, probably to a date half-way through the Hebrew Monarchy. The rites which accompanied the practice are not known, but the bodies of the victims (sometimes of children) have been found in jars buried at the ends of the walls or under the door-jambs. At Megiddo was found the skeleton of a girl about fifteen years old who had been built into the foundation of a fortress, and at Taanach was found the skeleton of a child of ten. Within the jars were deposited lamps, bowls, jugs, etc., as in ordinary burials.

The idea underlying such sacrifice seems to have been the propitiation of those spirits whose abode is supposed to have been disturbed by the new foundation; and it is to be observed that the custom still survives in the sacrifice of a sheep or other animal, which is indispensable to the safe occupation of a new house in

Moslem lands, and even to the successful inauguration of a public work, such as a railway, or—as recently in Damascus—of an electric lighting installation. In the words of an Arab sheikh, "Every house must have its death—man, woman, child, or animal."

THE CLOSE OF SOLOMON'S REIGN.

(1 Kings ix. 10–xi. 43.)

Sheba.

The country of Sheba is best known to us in connection with the visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon. There are several other references, however, in the Old Testament, and they almost invariably speak of Sheba as a distant and wealthy kingdom, trading in spices, gold, and precious stones. The home of this ancient people, known to the classical writers as the Sabæans, was in the south-west of Arabia, that part which corresponds to the modern Yemen.

This district is even to-day by far the finest in Arabia, as regards both soil and climate. Zwemer speaks of the happy valleys of Yemen, the Switzerland of Arabia: "A country," he calls it, "where the orange, lemon, quince, grape, mango, plum, apricot, peach, apple, pomegranate, fig, date, plantain, and mulberry, each yield their fruit in season; where wheat, barley, maize, millet, and coffee are staple products, and where there is a glorious profusion of wild flowers—called 'grass' by the unpoetic camel-drivers. A land whose mountains

lift up their heads over 9000 feet, terraced from chilly top to warm valley with agricultural amphitheatres, irrigated by a thousand rills and rivulets, some of them perennial, flowing along artificial channels or leaping down the rocks in miniature falls. A land where the oriole hangs her nest on the dark acacia, the wild doves hide in clefts of the rock and the chameleon sports his colours by the wayside under the tall, flowering cactus." Such is the land of Sheba to-day. And its prosperity must have been even greater in the days of its famous Queen. Through her capital city of Marib passed the great trade route to Egypt and northern Syria; and the caravans of Sheba with their gold and silver, their spices and precious stones, were famed throughout the East. Everywhere may be seen the ruins of massive temples and fortresses, of walled cities and extensive irrigation works, fully confirming the Biblical account of the wealth of Sheba and the high civilization of its inhabitants.

Sheba was governed first of all by priest-kings, and then at a later date came the kings properly so-called. In an inscription of 715 B.C. Sargon declares that he received tribute of "gold, precious stones, ivory, spices of all kinds, horses, and camels" from Itamara, king of Sheba. Although no record has yet been obtained of the Queen of Sheba who was Solomon's contemporary, the names of queens of other Arabian tribes occur, and it is interesting to note that in the Sargon inscription the name of Samse, queen of Aribu (Arabia), immediately precedes that of King Itamara.

NOTES.

1 Kings 10^{22} "*apes.*"—Apes were much sought after; they figure on many ancient monuments among the things offered as tribute to Assyrian kings, *e.g.* on the Black Obelisk erected by Shalmaneser II., the contemporary of Jehu. Similarly it is recorded that baboons and monkeys were brought from Punt by the expedition dispatched by the Egyptian Queen Hatshepsut in the fifteenth century B.C. (Breasted, *History of Egypt.*)

1 Kings 11^{36} "*And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a lamp alway before me in Jerusalem.*"—The image is taken from the custom of keeping a lamp constantly burning in the tent or house, a custom still observed by the fellahîn of Palestine. The extinction of the light signifies the breaking up of the home and the destruction of the family. (Cf. Scott's *Peveril of the Peak*; see art. LAMPS, p. 22.)

JEROBOAM OF ISRAEL AND THE PROPHET OF BETHEL.

(1 KINGS xii. 1–xiv. 20.)

FOOD IN PALESTINE.

The principal article of food in Palestine is bread, which is not made in large loaves as with us, but rather resembles our oatcakes and pancakes. The "loaf" of the native consists of a round of "toasted whole wheatmeal or barley, sometimes of both mixed, about half an inch thick and some nine inches in diameter." Two or even three of these pancakes would not be con-

sidered an immoderate meal for a hungry man, and thus the importunate friend of our Lord's parable was justified in borrowing three "loaves" to set before his unexpected guest (Lk. 11[5]). Bread in the East is not cut with a knife, but is torn or broken into pieces with the fingers. At meals, when a spoon is used for dipping into the common dish, the diners hold a loaf in the left hand to catch any drops that may fall as they convey the spoon to their mouth. Where no spoon is provided a piece of the loaf is broken off and used as a spoon, which is dipped into the common dish. This improvised spoon is eaten after it has been used once. "At meal-time," said Boaz to Ruth, "come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar" (Ruth 2[14]). And at the Passover Supper our Lord said, "He that dipped his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me" (Mt. 26[23]).

While bread is the staff of life in Palestine, the natives have a variety of other articles of food, the chief being rice, flour, cereals, meat, vegetables, milk, eggs, honey, oil, and fruit. All of these, with the exception of rice, which was imported at a later date, were known to the Hebrews.

Among the townspeople of Palestine great fondness is shown for cakes and pastries, of which there is great variety. "There are crisp network discs covered with sesame seed, paste-buns filled with pounded nuts and folded in triangular shape; threads of vermicelli are twisted together to the thickness of a rope, steeped in a sauce of honey and nuts, and arranged in a flat coil

to make a large cake on a flat tray; thin wafers are coated with grape-syrup and powdered with pungent or fragrant seeds and leaf dust; common loaves before being sent to the oven sometimes have the surface rubbed with oil and covered with aromatic seeds, and cakes are occasionally soaked or fried in boiling oil. Thin cakes of unleavened bread, often prepared with whimsical precautions against any contact with leaven, are eaten by the Jews during passover-week." (Mackie, *Bible Manners and Customs.*)

The " cakes of fine flour mingled with oil " mentioned in Num. 6^{15} correspond to the sweetened cakes fried in oil in a pan to which the modern inhabitants of Palestine give the name *zalabieh.* The manna of the wilderness is described as tasting like " wafers made with honey," and a similar pastry cake is found among the Arabs to-day. In 2 Sam. 13^{8} we read that Tamar made cakes for her brother. " She took flour, and kneaded it, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes. And she took a pan, and poured them out before him."

" Vegetable dishes of all kinds," says Baldensperger, " were common among the Hebrews (Num. 11^{5}; cf. 2 Kings 4^{39}), though the young student who was sent to gather vegetables brought his lap full of the squirting cucumber, which he mistook for the edible cucumber, and would have poisoned the whole company but for the intervention of Elisha. The dish which Boaz had prepared for his servants, and to which he invited Ruth (2^{14}), was probably vegetable, consisting of the sorrel prepared like spinach."

When the three angels appeared before Abraham under the oaks of Mamre the patriarch's first care was to provide an ample repast for his honoured guests. He "hastened," we are told, "into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto the servant; and he hasted to dress it. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat" (Gen. 18^{6-8}). To give a calf was the highest possible attention that one could show to one's guests, even as it is to-day in the East. Says Hardy: "The father of the prodigal son in the parable could not better show the yearning love he felt towards his returned child than by ordering, not the usual chicken or kid, but a fatted calf to be killed to greet his return (Lk. 15^{23}). It is called '*the* fatted calf,' and it was and is the custom for a farmer to keep a fat calf ready for the visit of a guest."

The cooking by Abraham and Sarah for their guests was as rapid as was that of the witch of Endor when she served up her fatted calf and unleavened bread to Saul (1 Sam. $28^{24f.}$). It is so now. Arabs cook meat immediately after it is killed, and bake fresh bread for every meal. Whether it be a fowl or a kid or a calf that is for dinner in the East, killing and eating, as in the time of St. Peter, follow each other immediately (Acts 10^{13}).

Fresh fruits were also eaten in their season and a

considerable variety of preserved fruits are mentioned, such as figs, raisins, dates, walnuts, and almonds.

In the eighth chapter of Deuteronomy the land of Canaan is described as "a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig trees and pomegranates; a land of oil olives and honey" (v.[8]). There are far more olive trees than any other tree in Palestine to this day. "Olives," says Neil, "are as meat and butter to the Palestine peasants, the mass of the people, and one tree in full bearing will go largely toward feeding a family. The berries form a very nourishing and fat-supplying food, especially in the hot season of the year. Thus Jehovah in Palestine 'causes the face to shine from oil' (Hos. 14[6], Judg. 9[8-15], Ps. 104[15]).

"The usual food of the poor in Bible lands is a 'handful of meal and a little oil in a cruse,' whilst nothing could be more natural than that, in a time of famine, a poor widow, such as the one Elisha helped, should have nothing left in the house 'save a pot of oil.' The payment for Hiram's servants, 'twenty thousand measures of wheat for his household, and twenty measures of pure oil,' shows that the staple food of the working classes in Solomon's days was the same as it is now."

The following articles bear upon the verses specified:

1 Kings 13[30] Hebrew Funerary and Mourning Customs, p. 198.
14[15] Groves and High Places, p. 52.

THE REIGNS OF REHOBOAM, ABIJAM, AND ASA OF JUDAH.

(1 Kings xiv. 21–xv. 24.)

Lamps.

There is no description given in Scripture of the material of which the ordinary lamp of Palestine was made, or of its shape, but recent excavations have produced numerous examples belonging to all periods. The earliest kind is of clay, in the shape of a saucer, or flat shell, and with a portion of the rim pinched to form a resting-place for the wick of twisted flax. In later forms the lamp has the appearance of an oval bowl closed at the top except for a small hole into which the oil was poured, with a sort of spout that takes the place of the pinched portion of the rim in the earlier examples. In the flat upper surface of this projecting piece, or spout, a hole is bored, into which the wick is inserted. There is sometimes a handle to this lamp, large enough to pass a finger through. In New Testament times this closed lamp, with the addition of designs on the upper surface, seems to have been the general type in use. It has very little room for oil, so that if it is required to burn for any length of time it must be replenished from the oil jar that is placed near it.

In the early Christian lamps a cross is sometimes imprinted on the clay of the upper part, and the rim is ornamented with a simple design. In other examples from Palestine, animals, birds, and mythological scenes

are traced on the lamps, and occasionally the lamp itself is fashioned in the shape of an animal, as in the case of the clay duck from Gezer.

The golden candlestick of the Tabernacle and the Temple was really a lampstand supporting on each of its branches a movable lamp, probably of the closed-in type, with a spout for the wick and an aperture at the top for the oil. According to Jewish tradition the lamp on the centre shaft, which was called the Western Lamp, was always kept alight.

In houses of the peasant class in the East to-day the lamp is generally placed on a shelf attached to the pillar in the middle of the room that supports the cross-beam of the roof, and thus it gives light "unto all that are in the house." High lampstands of stone have, however, also been found in recent excavations, but probably the poorer classes placed the lamp in a niche in the wall or on a shelf fixed to the central pillar.

In a country so rich in olive oil as Palestine it was not difficult or expensive to keep the household lamp alight both day and night, in order to have light and also to have fire always at hand. In its figurative use in the Scriptures the burning lamp stands for prosperity and happiness. Yahweh promises David "a lamp alway before me in Jerusalem" (1 Kings 11^{36}), implying the permanency of David's line. In Job 18^{6} we read that "the light [of the wicked] shall be dark in his tent, and his lamp above him shall be put out." And again, in Prov. 13^{9}: "The light of the righteous rejoiceth: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out."

The burning lamp stands for the continuance of a prosperous life, and the putting out of the lamp signifies destruction. The modern Eastern custom of sending a lamp with olive oil as a present to those invited to a wedding is probably to be traced to this early idea of the lamp as the symbol of prosperity.

REIGNS OF NADAB, BAASHA, ELAH, OMRI, AND ZIMRI OF ISRAEL.

(1 Kings xv. 25–xvi. 28.)

The City of Samaria.

In 1 Kings 16^{24} it is stated that Omri, who was the first to found a stable dynasty in the Northern Kingdom, "bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, Samaria." Shomeron (the "Watch-tower"), as it is in the Hebrew, is an eminently appropriate name, for the hill commands the road from the north, the road to the coast on the west, and the highway to Gilead on the east. It lies about 6 miles north-west of Nablous (Shechem), and 23 miles from the Mediterranean. The hill rises to a height of 350 feet above its surrounding valleys and is practically isolated, being joined only on the east to the chain of Ebal. In shape the hill is oblong, about 4 to 5 miles in circuit at the base, and with a wide platform at

the top. The sides of the hill, which are steep and difficult to scale—except on the east, where the ascent is slightly easier—are terraced in every direction, and the entire hill is covered with olive orchards, fig trees, and pomegranates. The modern village of Sebustiyeh, containing about 800 inhabitants, is situated on the eastern slope of the hill. "Sebustiyeh," it will be noticed, preserves the name "Sebaste," the Greek for "Augusta," which Herod gave to the city, in honour of Augustus, when he raised it up again from its ruins. On the western side of the hill there are the ruins of the gateway, flanked by two towers, which led through the ancient wall, and from this gateway there now runs a path to the village on the east, half a mile distant. The path passes by the remains of Herod's colonnade, which surrounded the temple built by Herod in honour of Augustus. "In the middle of the town," says Josephus, "Herod built a sacred place of a furlong and a half (in circuit) and adorned it with all sorts of decorations, and therein erected a temple, which was illustrious on account of both its largeness and its beauty." Near the village itself there are also the ruins of the Crusading Church of St. John Baptist, in which an erroneous tradition localized the beheading of the saint.

It was by the gateway that "Ahab drew his sentence of death from the prophet of Jehovah; and there they washed his blood from his chariot, when they had brought him back to his burial. There Jezebel slew the prophets of Jehovah and Jehu the priests of Baal.

There Herod married Mariamne, and when in his jealousy he had slain her for nothing, there she haunted him, till his remorse "would frequently call for her and lament for her in a most indecent manner, and he was so far overcome of his passion that he would command his servants to call for Mariamne as if she were still alive and could still hear them. There, too, he strangled his two sons. Like most of Herod's magnificent palaces, Sebaste was but a family shambles." [1]

From the seventh year of Omri, the city of Samaria, "the crown of pride . . . on the head of the fat valley," as it is called in Isaiah, was the capital of the Northern Kingdom, the residence of its kings and their burial-place. The town was constructed about 900 B.C., but soon after this date it appears to have been besieged by Benhadad I., who forced certain trade concessions from Omri. When Ahab succeeded to the throne he built there a temple to Baal and an ivory palace. Ahab had married Jezebel of Phœnicia, and this alliance had introduced the Phœnician cult to the capital. Benhadad II. now attacked the city, but unsuccessfully, and had to relinquish the rights gained by his father. Then followed a second siege of the city by Benhadad, in Jehoram's reign, and the inhabitants were at their last extremity when they were unexpectedly delivered by a sudden panic which seized the Syrian army (2 Kings 7^{1-20}). In 724 B.C. Shalmaneser IV. besieged Samaria in revenge for Hoshea's disaffection, but it did

[1] George Adam Smith, *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land.*

not actually fall till 722 B.C., in which year Sargon captured the city, and 27,290 of the people of Israel were transported to Assyria. Babylonian colonists were sent to Samaria and established there, which entailed the erection of houses and the rebuilding of the fortifications. The next disastrous date for Samaria was that of 331 B.C., when Alexander the Great took the town by assault, killed many of its inhabitants, and planted it with Macedonian colonists. In 120 B.C. it fell to John Hyrcanus, after a year's siege. Herod rebuilt the city, erected a magnificent temple there, strengthened its fortifications, and changed the name of the renovated city, as we have seen, to Sebaste. In Acts 8^5 it is stated that "Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them the Christ." The city, however, was now departing from its former greatness, and giving way before the rising importance of its near neighbour, Shechem; and by the fourth century it had already shrunk to a small town.

AHAB AND ELIJAH.

(1 KINGS xvi. 29–xxii. 40.)

THE VINEYARDS OF PALESTINE.

The vine has always had an important place among the industries of Palestine, for the climate there is peculiarly suited to the grape, which reaches perfection during the prolonged sunshine and dewy nights of late

summer. Vineyards are found all over the country, the favourite position being on gently sloping ground at the foot of a hill, for the vine likes open, loose soil into which it can sink its deep roots and reach the moisture that drips down over the surface of the mountain rock.

The preparation of a vineyard is described graphically in Is. 5^{1-3}. It is in fact a very elaborate process. First the rocky ground has to be laid off in terraces, one below the other, and these must be cleared of stones and rocks, which, when broken up or rudely shaped, are used for the building of the walls. For a vineyard, unlike common agricultural land in Palestine, is carefully enclosed. It needs to be sheltered from the scorching east wind, which would wither the grapes; animals such as jackals, foxes, and the wild pig are dread enemies, especially the latter, for the boar destroys the vine roots; and protection must also be provided against robbers. The land, cleared of rocks, has then to be sufficiently weeded, thorns and thistles, which are ignored in the cornfields, being carefully eradicated from the vineyards; after that, trenches must be cut for the proper irrigation and drainage of the terraces, which otherwise would be washed away in the semi-tropical rains of the country. When all this is done, and the vines are planted, a watch-tower is built for the more complete protection of the grapes. This tower is sometimes of stone, and provides not only a place of shelter, but accommodation for such processes as the boiling of the grapes into the sweet syrup or

grape honey which is still made in considerable quantities in Syria. Such was the tower of Mt. 21[33]. More often a mere booth of boughs of trees suffices, a temporary summer shelter, which, when the vintage is over, is suffered to rot away, or to be blown away by the winter storms. The picture of neglect and desolation which it then presents is used as a parable of the daughter of Zion in Is. 1[8].

There may be many kinds of grapes even in one vineyard, both of the purple and of the green sorts. "Some villages," says Mackie, "are celebrated for their variety, one having as many as twelve or twenty different kinds in its vineyards; others are famous for the perfection to which they have brought one particular kind. There are many forms and varieties of flavour. Names are suggested by something in the size or colouring of the grape or the general appearance of the cluster. Thus we have on Lebanon, *Bride's fingers* (of long tapering form, very smooth and translucent), *Maiden's cheeks* (with a blush of colour on each side), *Mule's head* (a large clumsy-looking purple grape), and *Hen-and-Chickens* (a cluster having green grapes surrounded by many small seedless ones about the size of currants)."

Fresh ripe grapes, eaten with bread, form a common article of food during September and October, and raisins (*i.e.* grapes dried in the sun) with olive oil, are a favourite and refreshing diet to-day as in Bible times. (cf. 1 Sam. 25[18] 30[12], 2 Sam. 16[1], 1 Chron. 12[40]). But the principal use of the grape was for the manufacture of

wine, which was made at the winepress when the grapes were fully ripe, the vintage season being in October.

The winepress consists of two troughs of stone about 5 or 6 feet square and 3 feet deep cut in the solid rock. The larger of the two troughs is placed at a higher level than the other, and into it the trodden grapes are thrown and subjected to pressure by means of a flat stone under a beam of wood. The grape juice thus pressed then runs out at the bottom into the smaller trough, whence it is collected and made into syrup, wine, or vinegar. Sometimes a certain portion is distilled and made into a spirit which the modern Jew calls "burning wine."

The treading of the grapes is an occasion of great rejoicing; it is done by men, women, and children, usually working in families. As they tread the grapes with their bare feet they keep up an incessant hand clapping and singing (Is. 16^{10}, Jer. 48^{33}), so that where the vintage shout is not heard one assumes the occasion to be one of solitude and sorrow (Is. 63^{3}).

"In the Jewish Prayer-book one of the thanksgivings is for the creation of the vine, and on the return from the synagogue, to which in the morning they go fasting, a glass of wine is drunk with this blessing pronounced over it. This custom was perhaps alluded to by Peter on the day of Pentecost as showing the impossibility of intoxication at 9 a.m.—an hour when Jews had but newly returned from morning prayer." (Mackie.)

The following articles bear upon the verses specified:

1 Kings 16^{34} Hebrew Building and Masonry, p. 12.
17^{1} 18^{5} The Climate of Palestine, p. 31.
19^{18} Groves and High Places, p. 52.
21^{27} Hebrew Funerary and Mourning Customs, p. 198.
22 Ancient Warfare, p. 59.

JEHOSHAPHAT AND AHAZIAH OF JUDAH.

(1 Kings xxii. 41–2 Kings i. 18.)

The following articles bear upon the verses specified:

1 Kings 22^{48} Ancient Ships, p. 246.
2 Kings 1^{2} Hebrew Houses and Furniture, p. 38.

ELIJAH SUCCEEDED BY ELISHA.

(2 Kings ii.)

The Climate of Palestine.

No country presents greater variation of temperature and fertility, within so small an area, than Palestine does, and this is due to two causes. The first is the differences of level—from 1300 feet below the Mediterranean at the coast of the Dead Sea, to the 9200 feet of the summit of Hermon. On the top of Hermon the snows lie almost the whole year round, while at Jericho a tropical temperature is experienced. The second cause of variation is the result of Palestine's position between the deserts on the east and the waters of the Mediterranean on the west, for it is thus under the climatic influence of both the sea and the desert. On the other hand, the Western Range, and, indeed,

most of the land with a height of 1000 to 2000 feet above the sea, enjoys a normal and healthy temperature, and its inhabitants are not exposed to the extremes of heat and cold prevailing in other parts of the country.

The Palestine year is divided into two seasons, the wet and the dry. The wet season begins about the end of October with what the Bible calls the "early" or "former" rains, and this marks the opening of the agricultural year, when the soil is sufficiently loosened to permit ploughing. Then, during December, there is generally a period of slight rainfall, increasing in intensity in January and February, and finally there come the "latter" rains of March and April, which fortify the crops against the heat of the early summer. During the winter hail is frequent, and snow lies sometimes for a few days on the hills, while Hermon retains it through the summer. Jerusalem occasionally experiences heavy falls of snow, which may remain unmelted for weeks in the hollows of the hills.

By the end of April the rain has ceased altogether, and for the next six months there is continuous dry weather with great heat. Mists in the morning, however, and the dews of evening occasionally alleviate the period of drought, and do something towards "reviving the hardier forms of vegetation."

If the rains begin earlier than their usual season, and the interval between the "early" and the "latter" rains is prolonged, there is always the danger that the crops will be withered up, and the same holds good if the rain is delayed in the spring. Again, should

the season be particularly late, the crops have not time to mature properly before the full heat of summer is upon them. So it is of the utmost importance that the rains should arrive in their due season, otherwise the crops will suffer and famines ensue. Other causes of local famine, in addition to lack of rain, are the destruction caused to crops by plagues of locusts or by hailstorms and thunderstorms, and the destruction which is the result and accompaniment of war. According to the account in Genesis, famine was the cause of the migration of the Hebrews into Egypt, and this famine appears to have been of wide extent, for "there was famine in all lands . . . and all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn" (Gen. $41^{54.\ 57}$). Professor Huntington considers that "there were periods of relative aridity in the ninth, the seventh, and perhaps the second centuries. Apart from the famines in the days of the Patriarchs and of Ruth, none are mentioned as of great importance until the time of Ahab in 870 B.C. The annals of Ethbaal, one of the strongest kings of Tyre, also record a famine at approximately the same period." In the famine of Ahab's reign both pasturage and springs appear to have failed. "And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go through the land, unto all the fountains of water, and unto all the brooks: peradventure we may find grass and save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts" (1 Kings 18^{5}).

Another important factor in the climate of Palestine is the wind. In the winter the prevailing winds are

from the west, and they come laden with sea-damp to break upon the hills in rain. As our Lord said: "When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is" (Lk. 12^{54}). In summer the winds are more from the north-west, and they do much to temper the heat and aid the peasant in his operation of winnowing. But from the east there comes, chiefly in the spring, the dreaded sirocco, blowing up from the Syrian desert and hiding with a veil of sand the face of the sun. In the desert the sirocco is a menace to every living thing, and in Palestine, though not actually dangerous in itself, it causes great discomfort and irritation, and often brings fever in its train.

"To the singular variety of the climate in which the Jewish nation grew up," says Principal Sir George Adam Smith, "we may justly trace much of the physical persistence and versatility which has made Jews at home in every quarter of the globe. This is something very different from the purely Semitic frame of body, which has been tempered only by the monotonous conditions of the desert. The Arab has never proved himself so successful a colonist as the Jew."

There is another effect of the climate of the Holy Land. "The climate of Palestine is regular enough to provoke men to methodical labour for its fruits, but the regularity is often interrupted. The early rains or the latter rains fail, drought comes occasionally for two years in succession, and that means famine and pestilence. There are, too, the visitations of the locust, which are

said to be bad every fifth or sixth year; and there are earthquakes, also periodical in Syria. Thus a purely mechanical conception of nature as something certain and inevitable, whose processes are more or less under man's control, is impossible; and the imagination is roused to feel the presence of a will behind nature, in face of whose interruptions of the fruitfulness or stability of the land man is absolutely helpless. To such a climate, then, is partly due Israel's doctrine of Providence."

THE MOABITE CAMPAIGN.

(2 KINGS iii.)

MOAB.

The patriarchal narratives in Genesis show that the Israelites recognized the Moabites as their kinsmen after the flesh. Moab was the son of Lot and Lot was the nephew of Abraham and accompanied him in his migration from Ur of the Chaldees to the Land of Canaan. That they really were of the same stock is also borne out by the similarity in their religious and social life, and by the fact that the language of Moab differed only dialectically from that of Israel.

The Moabites, however, left the life of the desert wanderer much earlier than Israel, and settled down in the land east of the Dead Sea. On the north they had at first the Amorites, and later the eastern tribes of Israel. On the east the land was bounded by the Arabian desert, and on the south by the land of Edom.

According to Sayce, they were in occupation of this territory long before the Exodus, for the name *Muab* appears in the lists of the conquests of Rameses II., the Pharaoh of the Oppression.

When the Israelites appeared on the borders of the land the Moabites had at first reason to welcome their appearance, for they found in these newcomers an ally against Sihon, the Amorite king who had stripped Moab of the territory north of the Arnon. The destruction of Sihon, however, did not give the Moabites back their lands. Apparently Reuben, and to some extent Gad, became the heirs of Sihon, and the Moabites had to enter upon a new struggle to recover their lost possessions. In the early period of the Judges the Moabites appear to have gained the upper hand, and the territory occupied by the tribe of Reuben passed under their control once more.

In the reign of David, Moab became tributary to Israel. How long this subjection lasted we do not know; probably it continued through the reign of Solomon, but after the death of the latter Moab had apparently regained its independence.

Our next source of information is the famous "Moabite Stone," a monument of black basalt erected by Mesha, king of Moab, *circa* 850 B.C., which was found among the ruins of the ancient Moabite city of Dibon (the modern Dhiban), and is now preserved in the Louvre. In this inscription Mesha states that Omri, king of Israel, had subjugated the land, but in the reign of Omri's son, Ahab, Moab revolted and was successful in regain-

ing its independence. "This," says Mesha, "was in my days. I avenged myself upon him (Omri), and upon his house, and Israel perished with an everlasting destruction." Jehoram, with the aid of Judah and Edom, next attempted the conquest of Moab. They attacked Moab from the south-east, defeated the army opposed to them, and besieged Mesha in his capital city. In his extremity the king of Moab sacrificed his first-born son to Chemosh on the city walls, and the superstitious awe aroused by this deed so wrought upon his enemies that they abandoned the siege.

Later references to Moab show that the country passed, like the other Syrian states, under the yoke of Assyria, and, after the downfall of the Assyrian Empire, became tributary to Babylon. After the Exile the Moabites disappear from history, and appear to have become merged in the Arabs.

There was considerable similarity between the religion of Moab and that of early Israel. "The relation of Moab to Chemosh," says Dr. Bennett, "as indicated on the Moabite Stone, is similar to that of Israel to Yahweh as it may be gathered from the earlier portions of the Old Testament. The name of Mesha's father is a compound of Chemosh, as the names of Israelite kings are compounds of Yahweh, *e.g.* Jehoram, Ahaziah. Chemosh is angry with his people, abandons them to their enemy, and in his own good time saves them; just as Yahweh is angry with Israel, punishes them by foreign invasions, and delivers them. Chemosh bids Mesha, 'Go, take Nebo from Israel'; 'Go down, fight

against Horonaim,' and Mesha obeys and is rewarded with victory; just as Yahweh said to David, 'Go up: for I will certainly deliver the Philistines into thy hand'; and David obeyed and was victorious. Mesha massacres the population of captured cities in honour of Chemosh, just as Joshua massacred the inhabitants of Jericho in honour of Yahweh. The savage rite of the *herem* or ban was common to both peoples. In fact, in these and other respects the inscription reads like a chapter from *Samuel* or *Kings*. In 2 Kings 3^{27} we read that Mesha offered his first-born as a burnt-offering—doubtless to Chemosh; as Abraham proposed to offer Isaac to Yahweh."

But there is no evidence that the Moabites recognized Chemosh as the only living and true God, or that any attempt was made to introduce a purer form of worship; nor did any prophet arise as in Israel to point the way forward to that redemption which was first the hope of Israel and, through Israel, of the world.

The following article bears upon the verse specified:

2 Kings 3^{15} The Hebrew Prophets, p. 234.

INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF ELISHA.

(2 Kings iv. 1–vi. 7.)

Hebrew Houses and Furniture.

On entering Palestine the Israelites must have occupied the dwellings of the dispossessed inhabitants, and for a long time little building was done. The genera-

tion which began to build new houses must have been born and bred in the country, and the architectural styles must have been those already in vogue. In other words, the Hebrews probably copied the Canaanitish modes, and, although there would seem to have been some advance in state architecture in the time of Solomon, we have no evidence of any great change in domestic architecture. And as in the East men go on building from age to age as their forefathers built, it is probable that the houses which we now see in Palestine are such as those in which Hebrew and Jew dwelt in O.T. and N.T. times.

Then as now two definite divisions occurred in society : the rich and the poor, the aristocrat, and the peasant or "fellahîn"; and the type of dwelling of these two main classes differ in many details.

1. *The Houses of the Rich.*

Detached houses standing in their own grounds must not be looked for in the East. The necessity for mutual protection has been the cause of a very cramped plan of building, and the large "country house" is practically unknown. Nor does the Oriental lavish great care upon his frontage, as does the Westerner. He builds right on to the street and is careful to avoid any windows or unnecessary openings which would face the street. The door or "gate" is closed forbiddingly, and every window is closely latticed. The Western mode of throwing open the front of a house is very repulsive to the Oriental,

whose reserve appears to us to savour of exclusiveness and mystery. Houses of a good class are made of a kind of white soft sandstone which is cut into blocks with saws. On the inside this may be veneered with marble, and the floors are almost invariably of this substance; for houses in the East are built not so much for warmth as to afford cool shelter from the heat. Sometimes the walls are decorated with inlaid panelling (cf. 1 Kings 22^{39}, Amos 3^{15}). Ceilings are also panelled —the "cieled houses" of Haggai 1^{4} (cf. 1 Kings 6^{15}); the less important rooms are simply plastered. Swords, daggers, and guns may adorn the walls, but the fashion is rather for restful spaces as befits a warm climate. There is no attempt at wall papering.

The door of the house is a place of peculiar sanctity and importance, and the difference between the outside and the inside is that of two different worlds. In large houses there is a doorkeeper, who acts as watchman. Where there is no official of this sort a servant or member of the family will inquire who knocks before the gate is opened, and when the voice is recognized an entrance is permitted. In such manner was Peter recognized in Acts 12^{13}.

As one enters the outer door a passage leads to the court, on to which the various rooms of the house open; a fountain may play in this court. Facing the doorway there is often a single pillar which carries the weight of part of the house, reminding one of the pillars which Samson overthrew when brought before the Philistines for their amusement (Judg. 16^{29}). Eastern houses are

never high, for the Oriental dislikes ascending stairs or steps, and prefers to gain room by extending the breadth of his habitation rather than its height. Most of the rooms therefore are on the ground floor, but there may be one or more upper rooms making the houses just one storey high. The principal one of these is over the gateway, and in this " summer parlour " the master of the house will lounge or doze listlessly in the heat of the day, perhaps amusing himself by viewing the street through the latticed window, while he remains unseen. In such a chamber Ehud smote the king of Moab (Judg. 3^{21}).

The roofs of the houses are flat and are approached by a flight of stone steps upon the outside of the buildings. These flat roofs are often referred to in Scripture, and the allusions show that they were made to serve the same uses as at present. In fine weather the inhabitants resorted to them to breathe the cool air of the evening and to witness any unusual event (2 Sam. 11^{2}, Is. 22^{1}, Mt. 24^{17}, Mk. 13^{15}). In summer it was a favourite place for sleeping and privacy (2 Sam. 16^{22}, 1 Sam. 9^{25}) ; it was also used for prayer and meditation (Acts 10^{9}), and sometimes for idolatrous worship (Jer. 19^{13}, Zeph. 1^{5}). It is the fashion still to erect in the summer temporary booths or arbours, made of boughs and branches of trees, so as to provide cool shelter in the heat of the day ; and that people might not fall from the roofs of their houses the Mosaic Law enacted that stone railings or " battlements " should be provided (Deut. 22^{8}). Grain, summer fruits, and fuel were often stored upon the housetops (Josh. 2^{6}).

Eastern houses are very imperfectly lighted, since darkness means refreshing coolness. Similarly, very little provision is made for heating them, a brazier being brought in during cold days (Jer. 36^{22}, Zech. 12^{6}). Kitchens are open to the air, otherwise the heat would be unbearable, and the food is cooked on charcoal fires. A great deal of the food is brought in from outside and not prepared at home at all. Similarly, most people go to the public baths for their toilet, though the use of private baths is indicated in 2 Sam. 11^{2}.

The furniture of these houses may be very rich. Costly carpets are laid upon the marble floors; a divan runs round three sides of each dwelling room, and on it are cushions of richly embroidered cloth. Inlaid tables and chairs are placed in convenient positions; couches of elaborate design are sometimes seen, and in the women's apartments are such toilet requisites as mirrors, paint pots, jewel cases, and the like. A typical guest-chamber is pictured in 2 Kings 4^{8-10}.

2. *Peasants' Houses.*

The houses of the fellahîn are for the most part one-roomed tenements built of mud bricks or of rough stones and mud, and having the bare hard earth for the floor. The roof is flat and is composed of rough beams over which are laid smaller rafters reinforced with brush-wood, earth, reeds, and mud. Such roofs are far from watertight (Prov. 27^{15}). Sometimes an "upper room"

is built on the roof, a sign that the occupant is a little above the social status of the mere fellahîn. In the common house of the latter the family ass and cow will share the dwelling-room with the family, so that when the goodwife bears a child she often finds the manger the most accessible form of cradle (Lk. 2^{7}). Such a house has practically no furniture. In the centre is a hearthstone on which the fire of thorns, grass, and dung gives forth a pungent smoke which strikes the throat, nostrils, and eyes of every occupant in a most torturing fashion; hence the reference in Prov. 10^{26}. Fortunately these fires are not often continuously burning, but where such is the case the nuisance is intolerable (Is. 65^{5}).

A lampstand, the "candlestick" of the A.V., is necessary, and may be extemporized out of a three-forked tree branch (see art. LAMPS, p. 22); the only other things in the house are a few cooking utensils, jars for water, corn, or oil, and the inevitable cornmill. There is no sleeping apartment, the peasant family simply lying down on the floor; but in the houses of the better artisans small divans against one wall are generally provided.

The following articles bear upon the verses specified:

2 Kings 4^{23} The Feast of Trumpets and New Moons, p. 286.
4^{26} $5^{9,10}$ Salutations, p. 48.
4^{39} Food in Palestine, p. 17.

WAR WITH SYRIA.

(2 Kings vi. 8–vii. 20.)

The Syrians.

The Syrians, or, more correctly, the Aramæans, were a number of scattered tribes who are first noted in the Euphrates valley, *circa* 1300 B.C., as occupying the district south-west of Harran. Thence they appear to have pushed westward until, in course of time, they occupied Damascus, which became the leading Aramæan state, other independent kingdoms being Aram-Geshur (one of whose princesses was the mother of Absalom; 2 Sam. 3^3), Aram-Maacah, Aram-Zobah, and Aram-Rehob lying between Mount Hermon and the Jabbok. These four cities became subject to David (2 Sam. 10), Damascus regaining its independence after David's death; thereafter the history of Syria became the history of Damascus (see art. p. 158). The language of the Syrians (Aramaic) exerted a peculiar influence upon the ancient world, since it became the language of commerce and diplomacy, occupying somewhat the same status then that French does now. One who spoke Aramaic could therefore travel anywhere.

Dove's Dung.

It is stated in 2 Kings 6^{25} that the extremity of the people during the siege of Samaria was so great that "the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung" was sold for five pieces of silver.

The following use of dove's dung is vouched for by E. J. Clifton in *Bible Illustrations from Persia of To-day*. "Whatever the exact reason may be," he says, "there can be little doubt that in those ancient times, just as in our day in the land of Persia, the droppings from the pigeon tribe were considered a valuable article for gardeners and others. Dove's dung is reckoned valuable by the Persians for its great utility in the cultivation of a species of melon, which is said to be peculiar to the country. This melon has a white pulp of a close-grained nature; its taste is rather flavourless, but otherwise very sweet. It is highly prized and is cultivated with great care, being fertilized with the dung of pigeons or doves, which are maintained solely for what they produce in this manner.

"The neighbourhood of Isfahan particularly has a large number of towers, built especially for housing the enormous quantity of pigeons kept there. These towers, which rise to a height of some 60 feet or more, are circular in shape, with turrets of smaller dimensions on their tops. Naturally they are very conspicuous objects in the landscape, and have an appearance which rather suggests the old-fashioned windmills without any sails attached. These droppings from the multitudes of birds which inhabit these towers are collected in a well in the middle. They are afterwards disposed of most profitably as valuable manure to the gardeners around the city. Like many buildings throughout Persia several of these towers have become ruins, which in days gone by were

sufficiently large to accommodate some thousands of pigeons."

FURTHER INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF ELISHA.

(2 Kings viii. 1–15.)

Dogs in Palestine.

The dogs of the East are very different from the domesticated animals in our country and, so far from being the friend of man, are savage in the extreme. In winter, when food is scarce, they sometimes work in packs and, if driven by hunger, may be a most serious menace to the lonely traveller. They are encouraged in the towns because they act as scavengers; for sanitation, as we understand the term, is practically unknown in the East, and so the dogs are useful in clearing away the village filth and the carcasses of dead animals which are suffered to lie about in the streets of village and township. It was probably because of the filthy nature of the food of these pariah dogs that they were pronounced unclean in the Mosaic Code, and were looked upon with such aversion and disgust. For, although the dog is mentioned nearly forty times in the pages of the Bible, there is scarcely a single instance in which it is not spoken of with contempt (cf. Is. 66^3, Mt. 7^6, 1 Sam. 17^{43} 24^{14}, 2 Sam. 3^8 9^8 16^9, 2 Kings 8^{13}, Ps. 22^{16}, Phil. 3^2, Rev. 22^{15} etc.).

The dogs in the East keep up an incessant howling

and barking in the night as they wander round about the city (Ps. $59^{14.\ 15}$), and they have a curious habit of keeping to certain districts, so that if a dog ventures into the territory of another pack it is immediately set upon by the dogs of the invaded area, the quarrel setting every dog in the city barking furiously.

The shepherd dogs are superior animals, and have the intelligent ways of our own dogs. They are much bigger than the pariah dogs, which more resemble jackals, and they are so jealous of their guard that it is not safe to approach a flock of sheep unarmed unless the shepherd is friendly. The town dog, on the other hand, is afraid of man, and, whereas the sheep dog will not hesitate to make a fierce attack upon an intruder, the former will slink away unless running with the pack. The Egyptians, unlike the Hebrews, bred several races of dogs, which were highly prized for such purposes as hunting, or as domestic pets.

The following articles bear upon this section :

Climate of Palestine, p. 31.
The Hebrew Prophets, p. 234.
Locusts, p. 277.

REIGNS OF JEHORAM AND AHAZIAH OF JUDAH.

(2 Kings viii. 16–29.)

The following article bears upon the verse specified :

2 Kings 8^{19} Lamps, p. 22.

THE STORY OF JEHU.

(2 Kings ix. 1–x. 36.)

Salutations.

If the Oriental salutation had been the hurried nod of the head or the "How d'you do" of the Western, Elisha would not have given Gehazi the command "Gird up thy loins and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the child" (2 Kings 4^{29}). This was a matter of life and death. There was to be no loitering on the road to exchange the flowery compliments of greeting. For the Oriental is not disposed to cut his greetings short. When he meets a friend in the street he rushes up to him, throws his left arm round his friend's shoulders, and kisses him first on the shoulder and then on the cheek. Laban ran to Jacob, and embraced him and kissed him (Gen. 29^{13}). Moses kissed his father-in-law (Exod. 18^{7}), and David and Jonathan "kissed one another, and wept one with another" (1 Sam. 20^{41}). If the friendship is not so close the kiss on the cheek is omitted. Absalom stood beside the gate and "when any man came nigh to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took hold of him, and kissed him" (2 Sam. 15^{5}), thus treating him as a friend and equal.

When they have embraced, friends then exchange the usual formulæ of greeting, and afterwards make

polite inquiries as to each other's health, business, and so forth. Mackie gives the following example of a conversation between friends meeting on the road :

A. Blessed is he that cometh.
B. And you twice blessed.
A. How is your health ?
B. Well, by your favour.
A. By the favour of God.
B. God is merciful.
A. How is your work ?
B. Praise be to God.
A. How is your father ?
B. He sends you his salutation.
A. I have been longing to see him.
B. And he still more.
A. Can I do anything for you ?
B. The Lord prolong your days.
A. That is a fine horse you have.
B. He would like to carry you.
A. When do you return, meaning no harm ?
B. As the Lord wills.
A. The Lord be with you.
B. May you have peace.

When two Moslems meet, the usual greeting is "Peace be upon you," to which the reply is "And on you be peace." Between Christians the corresponding salutation is "God be with you," to which the answer "And may God preserve thee" is given. In the morning it is customary to greet a friend with the

wish, "May thy day be fortunate," and he, in his turn, improves on this, by replying, "May thy day be blessed." When the evening has come, with the call of the muezzin to prayers, friend greets friend with the words, "May your evening be prosperous."

After the usual greetings have been made the Oriental asks after his friend's health and that of his family—not mentioning his wife, however, for that is not considered proper. "How is your state?" he says, or "How is your enjoyment?" and "How are the people of your house?" The answer to these questions is usually the indirect one of "Praise God" or "I thank the Lord." The question is often asked again and again, and each time the answer is the same, whatever the real state of things may be. The bad news, if there is any, is conveyed later in the course of the conversation. Thus Baldensperger makes the following interesting comment on the way in which the news of Absalom's death was broken to King David. "Ahimaaz arrives first and says, 'All is well (in peace)' (2 Sam. 18^{28}), and then stands aside till the news is gently broken to the king, who had to ask several times 'If the young man Absalom is safe.'"

A common salutation for a king was the expression "O king, live for ever" (Dan. 2^4 3^9 6^{21}, 1 Kings 1^{31}, Neh. 2^3), and it corresponds with the present-day designation of the Shah of Persia—"King of Kings." A similar expression is used to-day in the East in letter-writing; it is considered etiquette to begin or end with such a phrase as "May your life last long," "May your

days be increased," and beggars will use the benediction "May you live a thousand years" upon receiving alms. The use of flattering titles is a very important item of salutation, and even the humblest person will be addressed by a title far beyond his station. This practice, indeed, has become so delicate that in Persia to-day it is considered wise to write or speak to the official classes through a "Mirza," or secretary, who understands the art of address. "One of the chief qualifications," says Clifton, "in a 'Mirza' in Persia is his ability to distribute their flattering titles to persons of rank and consequence with due discrimination, and with the utmost nicety of distinction, and yet to bestow sufficient adulation upon them.

"Some of the titles that are used in this way will appear to us Westerns not only to be fulsome and flattering in the extreme, but even to approach very near to blasphemy itself in their mode of expression, *e.g.* in writing to our Mission doctor he is occasionally addressed as the 'Messiah of the Times.'" This throws curious light upon Job $32^{21.\ 22}$.

The following article bears upon the verse specified :

2 Kings 9^{11} Hebrew Prophets, p. 234.

THE REVOLUTION IN JUDAH.

(2 Kings xi. 1–21.)

Groves and High Places.

In the Old Testament frequent mention is made of the *bamah*, or "high place," as a place of Hebrew worship. The normal situation of these local sanctuaries was, as the name suggests, on a height, the worshippers being said to "go up" to, and to "come down" from, the high places. But in some cases, even while it still had the name *bamah*, the sanctuary was not situated on a hill, but actually lay in a depression, as in the case of the high places mentioned by Jeremiah in the valley of Topheth at Jerusalem, and the Gezer high place, which is situated in a sort of saddle between the two hills of the city. The Israelites, when they conquered the land, took over these sanctuaries from the native inhabitants and substituted the worship of Yahweh for that of the Canaanite Baal and Astarte, but without making any considerable change in the general appearance or appointments of the high places.

It is clear, from the story of Saul's meeting with Samuel at Ramah (1 Sam. 9), that, at this period at least, there was no idea that worship at the high places of the land was a thing to be discountenanced. Saul in search of his father's lost asses makes his way to Ramah to consult the seer Samuel. At the entrance to the city he meets Samuel leaving the town on his way to the "high place," where the people are waiting

for him to come and bless the sacrifice. At Samuel's invitation Saul joins him and goes up with him to the *bamah*, where he takes part in the sacred meal, along with about thirty other guests, in the sacrificial chamber. There is no hint here of anything illegitimate in these rites. But at a later date, owing to the heathen practices which were indulged in at these sanctuaries, the worship at the high place was vehemently denounced. Hezekiah, we are told, "removed the high places, and brake the pillars, and cut down the Asherah," and though they were rebuilt by Manasseh, Josiah again waged war against them, destroying all the high places of his predecessors, including those that "Solomon had builded for Ashtoreth, Chemosh, and for Milcom." Isaiah (57[4ff.]) gives a vivid picture of the iniquitous rites performed at the high place: "Are ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood, ye that inflame yourselves among the oaks, under every green tree; that slay the children in the valleys, under the clefts of the rocks? Among the smooth stones of the valley is thy portion; they, they are thy lot: even to them hast thou poured a drink offering, thou hast offered an oblation."

The main features of the high place were:

1. The altar.
2. The stone pillar, or mazzebah.
3. The wooden pole, or asherah.
4. The laver for ceremonial washings.
5. The sacred halls, called "houses of high places."

1. *The altar.*—There was nothing elaborate about the construction of the altar. It was not necessarily a permanent structure and therefore was of simple construction, consisting of a mere mound of earth or unhewn stones, as commanded in Exod. 20^{25}: "If thou make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stones: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it." At Taanach an altar was discovered which was made of baked earth and ornamented with figures of animals in relief.

The high place at Petra affords an example of the kind of altar against which Exod. 20^{26} protests: "Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon." The altar here, which is 9 feet long, 6 feet wide, and 3 feet high, is cut out of the solid rock and has four steps leading up to it. A rectangular hollow, perhaps intended for the fire, is cut out in the top of the altar. On the east of the altar, at a distance of 15 feet from it, there is a rectangular court, 47 feet long from north to south and 20 feet from east to west, also excavated from the rock, and here, doubtless, the worshippers gathered before the altar.

2. *The stone pillar, or mazzebah.*—Near the altar stood the stone pillar, which in ancient times was a rough unhewn block of stone set up on end and supported at the base by smaller stones. This pillar was regarded as the abode of the deity, and it was believed that to employ tools in shaping it was an act of profanation. At Gezer there are eight stone pillars still standing,

while the stumps of other two also remain. They range in height from 10 feet 6 inches to 5 feet 5 inches, and stand in a line due north and south. Dr. Macalister describes these pillars in order as follows :

" The first is a gigantic pillar which cannot be encircled by less than four people clasping hands. The second is comparatively insignificant, being the smallest of the whole series. It may, however, have been the most sacred of all the stones—possibly because it was the oldest. The indication that suggests this is the existence on its top of certain smooth spots, that look exactly like the worn places polished by the kisses of devotees on stones in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and other places of pilgrimage in Palestine and elsewhere. The kissing of the images or other representations of the divinity, such as these pillar-stones, was and is a rite common to almost all heathen worships. Compare ' all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him,' in 1 Kings 19^{18}, and the reference in Hosea 13^{2} to the kissing of the calf-images in the Israelite shrines.

" The third and fourth stones are comparable, but inferior, in size, to the great block with which the series commences. The fifth and sixth are comparatively small and insignificant. The seventh, which is rather larger, is of greater interest. It is the only stone of the row which differs in its composition from the rest. The other pillars were hewn from the local rock : this stone displays characteristics that show that it must have come from some other site. A groove has been

cut on its face, apparently to prevent a rope by which it was dragged from slipping. From the nature of the rock it is possible that this stone came from Jerusalem; in that case it was probably a sacred stone that stood in the corresponding High Place of the Jebusites, which was captured, perhaps in a successful raid, and set up in the Gezer temple as a war trophy.

"The eighth stone of the series is more shapely than the rest, and is peculiar in that it stands in a hollowed stone socket. It is flanked by the stumps of the two broken pillars. These three stones are divided from the remainder by a wide interspace, no doubt with intention. Ten, seven, and three are all numbers that seem to have had a certain sanctity among the Western Semites, and cases illustrating this are not wanting in the Old Testament.

"The erection of pillars like these as symbols and representatives of the divinity was a custom common to all Semitic races, not excepting, in their early stages of development, the Hebrews themselves. Jacob erected such a pillar in consecrating a place where the Lord had appeared to him, and specially named it *the House of God* (Gen. 28^{22}). Even in the Temple of Solomon there were two sacred pillars, named Jachin and Boaz (1 Kings 7^{21}); and Hosea, picturing the Israelites' captivity, says, 'the children of Israel shall abide many days without king, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar, and without ephod or teraphim' (Hos. 3^{4}). Special charges were laid on the Israelites to destroy the pillars of the

Canaanites whom they supplanted ('break in pieces their pillars': Exod. 23^{24}), and the erection of a pillar to Jehovah was forbidden in the Deuteronomic legislation (16^{22})."

3. *The wooden pole, or asherah.*—The asherah, which the Authorized Version mistakenly renders "grove," is usually associated with the altar and the mazzebah, and appears to have been a wooden pole having some sort of symbolical significance in the Canaanite worship. From the various references to the asherah in the Bible we gather that it was of considerable size, and sometimes carved in a repulsive shape; for it is said of Asa that "Maachah his mother he removed from being queen, because she had made an abominable image for an Asherah" (1 Kings 15^{13}). It appears to have been planted in the ground, or perhaps in a stone socket, and could be plucked up or cut down, and destroyed by fire. Among the idolatrous practices of the Israelites which the Books of Kings condemns is that "they set them up pillars and Asherim upon every high hill, and under every green tree" (2 Kings 17^{10}).

The generally received theory as to the meaning of the asherah is that it was regarded as a substitute for the sacred tree. It has also been suggested, however, that it was a symbol of the goddess Asherah, possibly the same as the Arabian goddess Atirat, who shared with Baal the chief place in the worship of the early Semitic immigrants into Canaan, and who was later superseded in favour by Astarte, goddess of fertility.

4. *The laver.*—Great importance has always been

attached to ceremonial ablutions in Semitic worship. In the furniture of the Tabernacle the laver stood before the entrance into the Tent and was actually nearer to the Holy Place than the altar of burnt-offering. "And Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet thereat: when they went into the tent of meeting, and when they came near unto the altar, they washed; as the Lord commanded Moses" (Exod. $40^{31.\ 32}$). At the Gezer "high place" the laver is represented by a massive block of stone 6 feet 1 inch long by 5 feet broad and 2 feet 6 inches thick, having a rectangular hollow cut out in the top to hold the water. "The brim of the receptacle is broad, probably to allow of a person sitting upon it to wash his feet."

5. *The sacred halls.*—Attached to the high place there were frequently chambers or halls which served various purposes. They probably housed the priests; and were also the place where the sacrificial meals were eaten. They also appear to have contained the image of the god worshipped at the *bamah*. "Every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt" (2 Kings 17^{29}). It is not unlikely that these halls were the scene of the immoral practices which Ezekiel and Amos condemn.

At Gezer there were discovered two caves which had been originally independent, but later the entrance to the smaller one had been closed so that it was turned into a secret chamber. A narrow tunnel had then been

made leading into the larger cave. It has been suggested that the purpose of these caves was the giving of oracles, the inquirer being brought into the outer cave, where his questions were answered by a priest concealed in the secret chamber. The tunnel would have the effect of disguising the voice, and the worshipper would no doubt easily be persuaded that he was listening to the very words of the god.

REIGNS OF JEHOASH OF ISRAEL AND OF AMAZIAH OF JUDAH.

(2 Kings xii. 1–xiv. 22.)

Ancient Warfare.

In the days before the Hebrew Monarchy the wars of the tribes must have resembled those of early Greece, when "the two armies started out, marched till they met, had a fight, and went home," and only rarely, as in the case of the campaign against Sisera (Judg. 4), was it necessary to summon a large army. Probably warfare then resembled the Bedawîn raids of to-day, and may best be visualized from the account given in the art. Wilderness Raids, vol. i. p. 227.

1. *Weapons of Offence.*

From the days of Saul and David, when the Philistine aggression was so momentous, there came to be something akin to a standing army. This, of course,

was impossible before the establishment of a monarchy, and one of the first efforts at organization made by David was the creation of a permanent bodyguard of 600, who went by the official title of "mighty men." These were drawn from his followers in exile and were added to by mercenary troops, which, under later Hebrew kings, came to be regularized into thousands, with subdivision into companies of hundreds, fifties, and tens. Each of these had its own officer, the whole being under the supreme command of the "captain of the Host."

This army was composed chiefly of infantry, with some chariot units. The infantry were armed with a spear and shield. The former consisted of a stout wooden shaft with a metal-pointed head, the latter was made of leather stretched on a frame of wood. The archers carried a sword and buckler. The sword was a comparatively short, straight blade of iron, occasionally two-edged, and was worn in a leather or metal sheath carried by the girdle or waistband. The buckler was a small shield. The bows were of tough pliable wood, and were sometimes made with a double curve. The bow-string was of ox-gut, and the arrows were light reeds tipped with metal. The battle bows (Zech. 9^{10} 10^{4}) must have been of considerable size—the Egyptian bow measured 5 feet—and were strung by pressing the foot on the lower end while the upper end was bent down to receive the string into the notch. Hence the Hebrew expressions "to tread" the bow, *i.e.* to string it, and "bow treaders" for archers (Jer.

$50^{14.\ 29}$). The arrows were carried in a quiver slung on the back.

The slingers were recruited largely from the shepherd class, and the Hebrew sling consisted of a long narrow strip of leather widened in the middle to receive the stone. Great accuracy in aim was attained.

Officers were attended by an armour-bearer—a young man who carried the shield and a reserve of weapons. He acted very much in the capacity of the squire to the mediæval knight. These armour-bearers are particularly mentioned in 1 Sam. 14^{13} 17^{7} and 2 Sam. 18^{15}.

The Hebrew army, thus formed at first of volunteers, was afterwards made up of conscripts. Every citizen was liable for military service from his twentieth to his fiftieth year, and each city and district had to supply its quota. The first mention of regular pay is in 1 Macc. 14^{32}, in the case of the army of Simon Maccabæus. For the most part compensation was according to the spoils of war, he "that tarrieth by the stuff" sharing equally with his comrade "that goeth down to the battle" (1 Sam. 30^{24}).

War, it must be remembered, was, from the Hebrew point of view, essentially a religious duty. Israel's wars were the wars of Yahweh. His presence in the field was secured by the Ark, and an indispensable preliminary to fighting was ceremonial cleansing and other religious rites. The moment of attack was generally ascertained by "inquiring of the Lord" by means of the sacred lot, or, in later days, by consulting the opinion of some prophet,

as in 1 Kings $22^{5.6}$. Extermination of a conquered army was frequently attempted, and even the humane Deuteronomic Code spared only the women and children. The captives were mostly sold as slaves, while the heaviest possible indemnities were exacted.

2. *Tactics.*

"The tactics of the Hebrew generals were as simple as their strategy. Usually the battle was 'set in array' by the opposing forces being drawn up in line facing each other. At a given signal each side raised its battle cry (Judg. 7^{21}, Amos 1^{14}, Jer. 4^{19}) and rushed to the fray. For the wild slogan of former days, the Ironsides of the Jewish Cromwell, Judas the Maccabee, substituted prayer (1 Macc. 5^{33}) and the singing of Psalms (2 Macc. 12^{37}). It was a common practice for a general to divide his forces into three divisions (Judg. 7^{16}, 1 Sam. 11^{11}, 2 Sam. 18^{2}, 1 Macc. 5^{33}). A favourite tactical device was to pretend flight, and, by leaving a body of men in ambush, to fall upon the unwary pursuers in front and rear (Josh. 8^{15}, Judg. 20^{36}). As examples of more elaborate tactics may be cited Joab's handling of his troops before Rabbath-ammon (2 Sam. 10^{9-11}), and Benhadad's massing of his chariots at the battle of Ramoth-gilead (1 Kings 22^{31}). The campaigns of Judas Maccabæus would repay a special study from this point of view. The recall was sounded on the war horn (2 Sam. 2^{28} 18^{16} 20^{22})." (Kennedy.)

3. *Defensive Organization.*

Turning now to defensive organizations we find that the earliest fortification yet discovered in Palestine is that built *circa* 4000 B.C. by the neolithic cave-dwellers at Gezer; it consisted of simple earth ramparts, stone faced. The Semitic invaders who appeared in Canaan about 3000 B.C. relied upon natural defence such as spurs of rock or isolated eminences, on which they built their fortresses or cities. The Hebrew cities were walled with brick, and after the introduction of the battering ram the walls were strengthened by stone revetments. Such stone work was often very massive, as for example that found on the site of the Temple at Jerusalem and at Baalbek, where great monoliths of 60 feet in length and with a weight of 80 tons have been found. The thickness of such a wall might be as much as 28 feet and the height from 30 feet upwards. Such walls were generally castellated—the " pinnacles " of Is. 54^{12}. In addition to the walls every ancient city of importance possessed a strongly fortified part corresponding to the citadel or acropolis of Greek cities. Such was the " strong tower " of Thebez (Judg. 9^{51}), the " castle " in Tirzah (1 Kings 16^{18}) and the " stronghold " of Zion (2 Sam. 5^{7}). Besides these citadels there were numerous fortresses which guarded roads, passes, and frontiers.

Such places could be taken by assault, by blockade, and by a regular siege. Before the Hebrews learnt the use of the battering ram, entrance to an enemy fortress

was obtained by setting fire to the gates (Judg. 9^{49}) and by scaling the walls by means of ladders. Thus in 1 Chron. 11^{6} we read of Joab being the first to scale the walls of Jerusalem when David took that city. Sometimes an assault would be delivered through the gate, a favourite stratagem being to entice the defenders out by a pretended flight when an ambushed force would rush the gate. Such appears to have been the plan used for the capture of Ai (Josh. $8^{10ff.}$). An example of capture by blockade is instanced in the siege of Rabbath-ammon, which was forced to capitulate to Joab after the capture of the water fort (2 Sam. $12^{26ff.}$).

In long sieges a mound of earth was laboriously constructed sloping up to the walls, and on this the battering ram was placed. Battering rams are first mentioned in Ezekiel (4^{2}), these engines being called "rams" because of their butting action. Those of the Assyrians were worked under the shelter of large wooden towers mounted on wheels. These towers were sometimes several storeys in height, and archers were stationed on the upper ones. The Assyrian sculptures give life-like pictures of the various operations of ancient siegecraft. Here we see the massive battering-rams detaching the stones or bricks from an angle of the wall, while the defenders, by means of a grappling-chain, are attempting to drag the ram from its covering tower. There the archers are pouring a heavy fire on the men upon the wall, from behind large rectangular shields or screens of wood or wicker-work, standing on the ground, with a small projecting cover. These

are intended by the "shield" of 2 Kings 19[32], the "buckler" of Ezek. 26[8], and the "mantelet" of Nah. 2[5] R.V., all of which are named in connection with siege works. In another place the miners are busy undermining the wall with picks, protected by a curved screen of wicker work supported by a pole.

The aim of the besieged was by every artifice in their power to counteract the efforts of the besiegers to scale, or to make a breach in, the walls (Amos 4[3]), and in particular to destroy their siege works and artillery. The battering-rams were rendered ineffective by the letting down of bags of chaff and other fenders from the battlements, or were thrown out of action by grappling-chains or by having the head broken off by huge stones hurled from above. The mounds supporting the besiegers' towers were undermined, and the towers themselves and the other engines set on fire (1 Macc. 6[13]).

In addition to the efforts of the bowmen, slingers, and javelin throwers who manned the walls, boiling oil was poured on those attempting to place the scaling ladders, or to pass the boarding bridges from the towers to the battlements. Of all these and many other expedients *The Jewish War* of Josephus is a familiar répertoire. There, too, will be found the fullest account of the dire distress to which a city might be reduced by a prolonged siege. (Cf. 2 Kings 6[25ff.]; and see A. R. S. Kennedy, art. FORTIFICATION AND SIEGECRAFT in Hastings' *S.D.B.*)

THE ASSYRIAN MENACE.

(2 Kings xiv. 23–xvii. 41.)

Assyria.

The original district occupied by the Assyrians was bounded on the north and east by the mountains of Armenia and Kurdistan, on the west by the Tigris, and on the south by the Upper Zab, but gradually the kingdom extended until it included all Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine, and parts of Asia Minor and Egypt.

The early history of this people is bound up with that of Babylonia, and the exact date of independence is not known. It is presumed to have been synchronous with the Kassite conquest of Babylon, *circa* 1700 B.C. Prior to that, for some centuries, Assyria seems to have existed as a subject kingdom to Babylonia; but from the time of her independence to 728 B.C. the Assyrians gradually gained in strength and importance, and at that date, in the reign of Tiglath-pileser III., the Pul of 2 Kings $15^{19.\ 20}$, they reached the climax of their development. Then it was that Assyria was mistress of the Orient and exacted tribute from almost the whole of the civilized world, dreaming, like Germany of our own day, of a time when her influence would be the chief factor in the civilization of the period. But these dreams were not realized. The triumphs of Tiglath-pileser were sustained only by his immediate successors, Shalmaneser IV., who began the siege of Samaria in 724 B.C., and Sargon, before whom it fell,

in 722 B.C. But though Sargon's conquests carried the Empire beyond even the limits of Tiglath-pileser, so that Cyprus sent him presents, and islands far down in the Persian Gulf paid homage to him, with his death Assyria began to crumble away. The process was not at once apparent. The conquests of Ashurbanipal in Egypt in 662 B.C. appeared to indicate that Assyria was mightier than ever, but degenerative influences were at work within, and in 606 Assyria fell before the Medes.

Assyria has left among her myriad inscriptions an extraordinarily complete picture of her character. She was militaristic to the core, and her policy was to effect subjugation of her enemies by the process of ruthless terrorizing. In battle her soldiers, drawn largely from the slave class, were exceedingly cruel. Corpses of the enemy were mutilated, lands were destroyed by the spreading of salt, and the heads of the slain were exhibited in piles outside her cities. Being a military Power, Assyria had as her chief deity the war-god Ashur, symbolized by a winged-disk with a man with a bow and arrow within the disk. His solar origin was indicated by the circle. He was not their only god, but he was paramount, and others were regarded as his assistants. Like other pagan peoples, the Assyrians did not evolve their own Pantheon, but merged into or absorbed that of others, and their religion was, in many respects, identical with that of the Babylonians, whose system they inherited. Nevertheless Ashur remained the rival of Marduk, the chief Babylonian deity, the climax of the conflict between the two being

reached when Sennacherib carried the statue of Marduk to Assyria in 689 B.C. It was returned to Babylon by Ashurbanipal. The other deities were, for the most part, personifications of the great natural phenomena. Among these was Tammuz. This god held a unique position. He was associated with Ea, the ancient water-deity and the father of Marduk, and was identified with all green plant life and with spring-time. Like the Egyptian Osiris, he revived in spring and died in summer, hence the allusion to the women "weeping for Tammuz" in Ezek. 8^{14}. His worship, indeed, was very popular and, extending to Israel, was very prominent in Ezekiel's time.

With Tammuz was associated Ishtar, the great mother-goddess, who personified fertilization. In her character of love-goddess her worship and fame spread to all the ancient peoples. She was the Astarte of the Phœnicians, the Ashtoreth of the Hebrews, and the Mater Magna of the Greeks and Romans. In Assyria she was associated with Ashur as a war-goddess.

Temples in Assyria were numerous, every important city having its tutelar deity. The temple was the centre of the social, commercial, and intellectual life. There the gods were worshipped, the law was dispensed, and commodities were bought and sold. The conspicuous feature architecturally was its large brick tower called a "zikkurat," consisting of two to seven super-imposed stages, the shrine surmounting the top at a height of about 150 feet. The tower was ascended by an external spiral with angular corners. In this

structure some archæologists see the prototype of the Mohammedan minaret and the Christian campanile.

There were many classes of persons devoted to and engaged in the service of the gods, in addition to a graded priesthood. There were vestal virgins; there were teachers; there were priestly judges; there were astrologers and physicians; and there were priestly scribes.

Many of these orders demanded that a candidate for the priesthood should be of noble birth, of priestly blood, perfect in bodily growth, and learned in all branches of science. Before ordination the candidate was shaved, as a part of the rite, the king sometimes performing this important act; and he was presented with a tiara, the symbol of his priestly office. After ordination, the priest was obliged to wear a distinct dress—a fringed cloak, reaching to the feet, with right arm uncovered; he was to go barefooted, and to assume the tonsure. A special tithe was instituted for the priesthood, and fees were demanded for all important services.

Society in Assyria consisted of three classes: the "Amelu," which included the king, the officers of state, and landowners; the "Mushkenu," or middle class; and the "Ardu," or slaves. The king, of course, was absolute, and his officers were inalienable from the official line. The middle class, however, had many and definite rights, the code of civil law, aiming at equity, being on the whole strictly observed. Personal integrity and morality were admired.

The burial customs of the Assyrians resembled those of ancient Egypt, in that they assumed that the dead continued a physical existence, so that the tomb was supplied with food, weapons, etc. Ordinarily the body was placed in a coffin of baked clay and interred within a brick vault in a temple court. The departed soul "edimmu" was spoken of as having "gone to its fate." It was thought of as a wind or breath, "napishtu," and was believed to continue in a conscious or semi-conscious state in a life inferior to the present. "To the Babylonians and Assyrians death was an unmitigated evil, with which no ethical considerations were connected. Once a soul departed to Arallu, his fate was unalterable and permanent. There was no belief in transmigration or resurrection. There is only one instance of a soul rising from Arallu, besides the goddess Ishtar, and that was Enkidu; yet he did not gain deliverance, but, like the shade of Samuel, returned again."

HEZEKIAH AND ISAIAH.

(2 Kings xviii.–xx.)

Jerusalem.

The origin of the city of Jerusalem is lost in obscurity, and as it is built upon the successive ruins of the previous cities, débris so considerable as to have totally filled up some of the ancient valleys, excavation is almost impossible. Perhaps were a great calamity to happen, comparable to the fire which destroyed Salonika in

1917, this might be the means of revealing many hidden secrets. As it is, the churches, houses, and mosques of modern Jerusalem are impenetrable locks to the treasures that must lie underneath their foundations.

The first reference to Jerusalem in the O.T. is generally regarded as Gen. 14^{18}, where there is mentioned the mysterious Melchizedek, king of Salem, Salem being supposed to be Jerusalem. This, however, is pure conjecture, and solid ground is not touched until some 800 or 900 years later, when the city of Uru-Salim is referred to in the famous Tel el-Amarna letters.

In certain Biblical passages the name "Jebus" is given for the city, *e.g.* Judg. 19^{10}, and its inhabitants are named "Jebusites"; they retained possession until they were ousted by David, of which event an account is given in 2 Sam. 5^{4-10}. When Jerusalem was captured entry was obtained by means of an underground tunnel or drain, such as was found in the excavations at Gezer, where there was a device for preventing access through it. And in 1834, when the peasantry revolted against Ibrahim Pasha, Jerusalem was entered in a similar way.

The following extract from an article by Prof. A. H. Sayce, in the *Expository Times*, October 1921, "The Latest Results of Old Testament Archæology," sheds new light upon the identification of the "City of David." "The French excavations at Jerusalem have finally cleared up the difficulties connected with the early topography of the city and brought to light the primitive Zion or City of David. This was the

Jebusite city, standing on the hill immediately to the south of the Temple-Mount and now generally known as Ophel. Here were the Jebusite citadel and the palace of David, whose tomb, along with those of his successors, was on its western slope. On the Temple-Mount was another city, Salem, called Uru-Salim, 'the City of Salem,' in the Tel el-Amarna tablets, which had been built by the Babylonians to protect the road running from the naphtha springs of the Dead Sea. Outside the walls of Salem was the ancient sanctuary of the neolithic population of Palestine, which consisted of a double cave as on other sites which have been excavated. In the reign of Solomon the two cities were enclosed by a single line of fortification, the space between them being filled up by what was termed the Millo, or 'Filling.' "

The history of Jerusalem from the period immediately following the death of Solomon up to the present day has been a very tragic one, and it is little wonder that there is practically nothing left of the O.T. buildings. It suffered its first siege in the reign of Rehoboam, when Shishak of Egypt took away the treasures of the Temple and of the Royal house (1 Kings 14^{25-26}). It was again pillaged by a coalition of Philistines and Arabs in the time of Jehoram (2 Chron. 21^{16}). Then followed a brief period of repair under King Jehoash of Judah, whose beneficent plans were somewhat frustrated by a threatened attack on the part of the Syrians, Hazael, king of Syria, having to be bought off (2 Kings 12^{18}). Soon afterwards Jehoash of Israel

came down upon Jerusalem, breached the wall and looted the royal and sacred treasures (2 Kings 14^{14}), an event which led to the better fortification of the city by means of additional towers and ballistæ. These improvements were effected by Uzziah and Jotham, and were further strengthened by Hezekiah, who was a great builder and engineer. It was in his reign that there was constructed the famous Siloam tunnel which brought additional water to the city. Further fortifications were added by Manasseh, while in the reign of Josiah considerable repairs were made to the Temple fabric. Then the city fell under the onslaught of Nebuchadrezzar, the Chaldean general, and the second chapter in its history came to a close.

"The aspect and area of the Jerusalem captured by Nebuchadrezzar must have been very different from that conquered about 420 years before by David. There is no direct evidence that David found houses at all on the hill now known as Zion; but the city must have grown rapidly under him and his wealthy successor; and in the time of the later Hebrew kings included, no doubt, the so-called Zion hill as well. That it also included the modern Acra is problematical, as we have no information as to the position of the north wall in pre-Exilic times; and it is certain that the quite modern quarter commonly called Bezetha was not occupied. To the south a much larger area was built on than is included in modern Jerusalem: the ancient wall has been traced to the verge of the Wady er-Rababi. The destruction by Nebuchadrezzar and the deportation of

the people were complete: the city was left in ruins, and only the poorest of the people were left to carry on the work of agriculture." (Macalister.)

The next chapter opens with the return of the Exiles from Babylonia, so fully recounted in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, the former telling us most about the restoration of the Temple (*q.v.*), and the latter about the reconstruction of the city fortifications. The Book of Nehemiah is our chief source of information concerning Jerusalem at this time.

Starting at the head of the Valley of Hinnom, we find at the south-west corner of the wall a rock scarp on which was built the Tower of the Furnaces (Neh. 3^{11}), a fortress which probably constituted the chief fortification in connection with the Corner Gate. Then came the Valley Gate, which was the main entrance on the western side. This gate was one originally fortified by Uzziah, and was believed to have occupied the site of the present Jaffa Gate (Neh. 2^{13} and 3^{13}). At the bottom of the valley, where it joined the Kidron, was the Dung Gate (*ibid.*), so called, probably, because the refuse of the town was carried out through it; for the Oriental, then as now, deposited the city filth just outside the city walls, where some attempt was made at burning it, and where the pariah dogs collected in their search for food. Turning northward was the Fountain Gate (Neh. 2^{14} and 3^{15}), which was associated with the Dragon's Well, a popular ancient name derived from an old belief that spirits in the form of dragons or serpents inhabited springs. Next was the

Water Gate, so called because the path leading from the spring of Gihon to the Virgin's Fountain entered there. Water-carriers passing in and out gave the gate its name. Between the Temple and the Water Gate there seems to have been a large open space in which the people could assemble. The houses of the Nethinim abutted on the city wall at this point. The gates on the north-east and north sides of the wall have not been identified, and only their names are known. They were the Horse Gate, whose name was perhaps derived from the horses dedicated to the sun by the idolatrous kings of Judah (2 Kings 23^{11}), the East Gate, and the gate "Hammiphkad."

On the north side was the Sheep Gate (Neh. 3^{1}), which is considered to be the same as that mentioned in Jn. 5^{2}. The fact that the priests restored this gate suggests that it was near the Temple. It is believed to correspond to the modern gate of St. Stephen. The name, of course, was derived from the presence of the sheep market in its vicinity. Large numbers of sheep would be required for the Temple sacrifices, and supplies would come from Eastern Palestine and Moab. The next was the Fish Gate (Neh. 3^{3}) leading to the Fish Market. It has been suggested that the fish brought by the Tyrian traders (Neh. 13^{16}) and by the fishermen of the Lake of Galilee would arrive by this gate. From Zeph. $1^{10.\ 11}$ it appears that this gate adjoined the merchant quarter of Jerusalem. Lastly, somewhere on the north side stood also the Old Gate (Neh. 3^{6}), perhaps the original entrance to the old city.

Jerusalem stood then, as it stands now, on the summit of the ridge of the Judæan mountains, at an elevation of 2500 feet above sea-level, and the elevated plateau on which it was built was intersected by deep valleys defining and subdividing it. Some of these are now, as has been noted, filled up by the débris of the ages. The defining valleys to-day are the Wady en Nar—which is the old valley of the Kidron, also called the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and separates the Jerusalem plateau from the Mount of Olives—and the Wady er-Rababi, identified with the Valley of Hinnom. These two valleys form the fork of an irregular Y, in which the city is built.

The plateau within this fork is divided by smaller valleys into four quarters, each on its own hill. These hills are traditionally Acra, Bezetha, Zion, and Ophel, but we have no authoritative information yet to enable us to identify them. As has been said, the accumulated rubbish of 4000 years has so filled these valleys that, except for that identified with the Tyropœon of Josephus, they exist to-day only as shallow depressions.

The site of Jerusalem is not well provided with water. The only natural source is an intermittent spring in the Kidron Valley, which is insufficient to supply the city's needs. Cisterns for rain-storage have been excavated from the earliest times, and water has been led to the city by conduits from external sources, some of them far distant. Probably the oldest known conduit is a channel hewn in the rock, entering Jerusalem from the north. Another (the "low-level aqueduct") is tradi-

tionally ascribed to Solomon: it brings water from reservoirs beyond Bethlehem; and a third (the "high-level aqueduct") is of Roman date. Several conduits are mentioned in the O.T.: the "conduit of the upper pool, in the high way of the fuller's field" (Is. 7^3), which has not been identified; the conduit whereby Hezekiah "brought the waters of Gihon straight down on the west side of the city of David," also referred to as the "conduit," whereby he "brought water into the city" (2 Kings 20^{20}, 2 Chron. 32^{30}), is probably to be identified with the Siloam tunnel, famous for its (unfortunately undated) Old Hebrew inscription.

For a description of THE TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM see art. p. 7.

THE REIGNS OF MANASSEH AND AMON.

(2 KINGS xxi.)

The following articles bear upon this section:

Jerusalem, p. 70.
The Books of Kings, p. 1.
Assyria, p. 66.

JOSIAH AND THE DEUTERONOMIC REFORMATION.

(2 KINGS xxii. 1–xxiii. 30.)

IDOLATRY DURING THE PERIOD OF THE MONARCHY.

A considerable number of the deities of Palestine were borrowed from Babylonia, a fact which is readily explained by the geographical relationship of the two

countries ; for Palestine was the main highway between Babylonia and Egypt, and religion and trade marched hand in hand. Baal, the chief of the Canaanite Pantheon, was the more Western expression of the Babylonian Bel, the Sun-god, and Ashtoreth, his consort, was the Phœnician form of Ishtar, the Babylonian goddess of the evening star. These two important deities further extended their sway into the Temple of Jerusalem itself, for the very pillar by which Josiah stood when he made a covenant before Yahweh (2 Kings 23^3) was an adjunct to Baal worship, and there also stood in the Temple the wooden pole, or asherah, the "grove" of 2 Kings 23^6 (A.V.), which was the symbol of Ashtoreth.

It is noteworthy that, while in the earlier Books of Samuel the references to Baal and Ashtoreth are numerous, when we come to Kings we find Rimmon, Moloch, and Milcom recurring with almost equal frequency, demonstrating that the pagan systems had made some considerable headway during the period of the Hebrew monarchy.

Rimmon appears to have been the most popular. He was of Babylonian origin. In Babylonia he was worshipped as the god of the air, but in Palestine he was identified with the Sun-god Hadad. He is mentioned in 2 Kings 5^{18} as a Syrian deity and the chief god of Damascus. There he played the twofold part of a beneficent deity, the giver of rain, and a malignant god of storm. His symbol was an axe and a bundle of lightning darts, so that he would seem to

have been the prototype of the Greek Zeus and the Roman Jupiter.

Moloch (Molech or Melech), of which the Ammonite form may have been "Milcom," and the Moabite "Chemosh," was a deity worshipped by the Israelites towards the close of the monarchy. The word is considered to mean "king." What kind of a god was known as the "king," and why were human sacrifices offered to him? These questions are answered by W. E. Barnes as follows: "It appears that this title was in use among the Phœnicians, and especially at Byblus; and Philo of Byblus writes of the god of his city, whom he calls Cronus, that he sacrificed his own son. Of this deity Diodorus (20^{14}) says, 'The Carthaginians had a brazen statue of Cronus with hands extended upwards, but with the palms bent downwards towards the earth, so that the child who was laid upon them rolled into a pit of fire below.' Now since Cronus was a god of the Underworld where 'no rays of the sun penetrated and no wind blew,' *i.e.* a god of the Dead, it is quite probable that the deity whom the Semites called Melech was also a god of the Shades. Such a god would naturally be supposed to have the desire of peopling his realm, and human sacrifices would seem to be acceptable to him. Thus Melech seems to be the designation of a deity like the Babylonian Nergal (2 Kings 17^{30}), the god of pestilence, war, and the country of the Dead. Porphyry writes that the Phœnicians in great calamities such as war, drought, or pestilence sacrificed one of those dearest to them to Cronus."

At the time of the Kings human sacrifice held a foremost place in the ritual of Syria. "It was the sacrifice of the first-born son," says Sayce, "that was demanded in times of danger and trouble, or when the family was called upon to make a special atonement for sin. The victim was offered as a burnt sacrifice, which in Hebrew idiom was euphemistically described as passing through the fire. Side by side with these human sacrifices were the abominations which were performed in the temples in honour of Ashtoreth. Women acted as prostitutes, and men who called themselves 'dogs' forswore their manhood. It was these sensualities practised in the name of religion which caused the iniquity of the Canaanites to become full."

THE FALL OF JUDAH.

(2 Kings xxiii. 31–xxv. 30.)

The following articles bear upon this section :

Solomon's Temple, p. 7.
Ancient Warfare, p. 59.
Assyria, p. 66.
Jerusalem, p. 70.
The Book of Ezekiel, p. 230.
Nebuchadrezzar, p. 219.

THE BOOKS OF 1 AND 2 CHRONICLES.

The name by which these two books are known in our English Bible is due to Jerome, who first described

them as "Chronicon totius divinæ historiæ" (A Chronicle of the whole of sacred history)—a title which was afterwards abbreviated into the one which the volumes now bear. In the Hebrew Canon the title is "Acts" or "Affairs of the Times," and in the Septuagint the books are designated "Paraleipomena," "Things passed over," from the idea that 1 and 2 Chronicles were written to supply the omissions in the Books of Samuel and Kings.

The two Books of Chronicles, like those of Kings, were originally one. The division was first made by the Greek translators, and from them it was adopted in the Latin Vulgate, and from that again in our English Version. In the ancient Hebrew Canon, the Books of Chronicles, with their sequel Ezra and Nehemiah, formed one continuous work.

That the books were written after the Captivity is proved by the fact that they end with the decree of Cyrus permitting the Jews to return to their father-land, though how long afterwards is not known. Those who believe that Ezra was the author place the date of Chronicles about 435 B.C., while others, arguing from the internal evidence of style, favour a date subsequent to 300 B.C.

Who the chronicler actually was remains one of the secrets of history. The Jews are unanimous in ascribing the volumes to Ezra, and it must be admitted that his influential position, and his high standing in the Levitical order, render the assumption quite possible. The close connection, too, between Chronicles and the

Books of Ezra–Nehemiah, their similarity of style, and their identity in tone and spirit, favours this theory. But whether Ezra was indeed the chronicler, or whether he wrote part of the books only, they are, nevertheless, a compilation from a number of sources, among which may be mentioned the following :

1. The earlier Books of the Canon from Genesis to Ruth, which were used particularly in the preparation of the numerous genealogies in Chronicles.

2. The present Books of Samuel and Kings, which, in many cases, are copied almost word for word.

3. A collection of State Annals called variously " The Book of the Kings of Israel," " The Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah," or " The Books of the Kings of Judah and Israel."

4. A series of prophetic monographs or biographies which are referred to in several passages, namely, those of Samuel, Nathan, Ahijah, Iddo, and others.

The very first glance at these two books shows that they are entirely different in their conception from the historical books which precede them, for up to the end of 2 Kings the volumes in the Old Testament present a more or less continuous history from the earliest times to the Babylonian Captivity, each succeeding book beginning roughly where the last left off, whereas Chronicles begins with Adam and reviews the whole period from then to the Restoration under Cyrus.

We have noticed that the translators of the Septuagint regarded these books as supplementary to those of Samuel and Kings, but though the chronicler may have

had such a design in view, this could hardly have been his main purpose, since there are so many lengthy and verbatim repetitions of the older works. Moreover, his books are rather an historical review of the past, written from a late standpoint with intent to carry back into the remoteness of a bygone age the origin of those religious customs which he felt so vital to the true Faith. He had the returned Exiles specially in mind, and he wished to link the present with the past, and so preserve a religious continuity, that the people might see that the new order of things was based upon the old. So he publishes the genealogies of the different tribes, that the true descendants of Jacob might be distinct from the heterogeneous population which returned from Babylon, the main object of this differentiation being ecclesiastical, as demonstrated in his concern to establish the line of priests and Levites.

The religious, not the political, interest is dominant throughout, and the chronicler has much more to say about the Temple and its ritual than about the wars of the kings or the material welfare of the people. He follows the fortunes only of the Southern State of Judah, since she alone retained the elements of the Yahvistic faith, and because the Holy City of Jerusalem, with all its sacred associations, was within her territory. The Temple, with its religious institutions, was to him the very core of the national life, and he wished, above all, to secure the re-establishment of its worship in accordance with the new Deuteronomic principles.

His endeavour, in short, was to represent the history

of his nation in such a way that the restored exiles would be inspired with the ancient faith of their forefathers, and would enjoy that regard for the established services of the one Central Sanctuary which he believed would alone enable them to reach that ideal state to which the Prophets had long looked. Not that he placed ritual before true worship. The Temple was sacred only in so far as it was the House of Yahweh, and faithfulness to the Temple was required only because such an attitude also involved fidelity to Yahweh.

Thus the chronicler is careful, in the presentation of his historical facts, to draw the inestimable lesson that the prosperity of each monarch was determined by his allegiance to the religious duties of his position. If he followed the example of David, he was rewarded with blessing and success; if he deviated from that path, he failed proportionately, while any lapse into idolatry was punished with signal and deserved calamity.

Thus he speaks of the kings of Israel and Judah as having been "carried away for their transgression," and of Saul as having "died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord." The life of the nation is represented as under the Divine guidance; all is viewed from the Theocratic standpoint, and national events which usually go to make up history are entirely subordinated to this higher view.

EZRA TO NEHEMIAH.

THE DECREE OF CYRUS AND THE RETURN OF THE FIRST EXILES.

(Ezra i.–ii.)

The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Separated in our English version of the Bible, the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah were originally a single work bearing, probably, the title of "The Book of Ezra." They undoubtedly were written for the most part by the two men whose names are now attached to the books, though certain redactions and emendations were subsequently made by later hands. Many official lists such as might be kept in any public record office are included, *e.g.* the list of the Temple vessels in Ezra 1^{9-11}; the names of the Zerubbabel party in Ezra 2^{1-70} and Neh. 7^{6-73}; the record of those who married foreigners in Ezra 10^{22-44}; the list of the builders of the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 3), and of the Covenanters (Neh. 10^{1-27}); and the nominal roll of the Priests and Levites in Neh. 12^{1-26}. On account of the strong "Levitical tendency" which is observed both in these books and in the Books of Chronicles, together with other similarities, it is assumed that the same compiler edited all four volumes.

The period of history comprised in the Books of

Ezra and Nehemiah covers a little more than a hundred years. The Book of Ezra opens with the Decree of Cyrus, which was promulgated in 538 B.C., and Nehemiah concludes with incidents occurring in the thirty-second year of the reign of Artaxerxes, *i.e.* 432 B.C. (Neh. 13^6). The occurrence of names more recent than these dates is considered to point simply to editorial emendations. The theme of the two books is, for the most part, the narrative of those important events which occurred at the time of the Restoration.

Historical Review.

Babylon fell in the year 538, and when the great Babylonian Empire passed into the hands of Cyrus, king of Elam and Persia, the conqueror's first act was to conciliate an important element in the population of Babylonia. It has been remarked in an earlier article that the Assyrians had first introduced the method of subjugating conquered peoples by bodily transportation. But the temper of colonists thus torn from their own country could never be other than dangerous, and the eagerness with which the coming of Cyrus was watched by the Jews seems to suggest that they had possibly conspired with the Persians in order to overthrow Babylon.

The Captivity had of course effected great changes in the life of the Jewish people. Their kingdom, founded by David, was destroyed, and the succession of their kings had come to an end. The Temple was razed to

the ground and the priesthood disbanded. Their whole religious and national outlook seemed dark and gloomy, and for many hope was dead.

But the Jews were not the only community who were released. The Decree of Cyrus was universal in application to all those who had suffered deportation under the cruel Babylonian system. And because all such movements were religious (for a people was supposed to carry its gods with it) the Decree had as one of its objects the propitiation of the offended deities who had been torn from their own land. Thus the worshippers of Yahweh were commissioned to rebuild their Temple at Jerusalem, and the sacred vessels seized by Nebuchadrezzar were, as far as possible, restored. (See art. THE SECOND TEMPLE, p. 314.)

Contents.

Ezra opens with an account of the first caravan which returned to Palestine. It was led by Sheshbazzar (Ezra 1^{8} 5^{14}), who is believed to be the same as Zerubbabel (Ezra 2^{2} 3^{8}, Zech. 4^{6}), and the official number of returned exiles is given as 42,360. These exiles settled in Jerusalem and the neighbouring towns and villages, and their first duty was to set about the rebuilding and dedication of the altar of burnt-offering (Ezra 3^{1-6}) and to lay the foundation of the Second Temple (Ezra 3^{8-13}). The latter work received considerable opposition from the Samaritans, due to the rejection by the Jews of their offers of co-operation.

The result of this hostility was the cessation of building operations for some nine years, until the energetic counsels of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah changed the current of events. These incidents are recorded in Ezra 4, 5, and 6.

After the dedication of the Temple there is a silence of nearly sixty years, during which the generation to which Joshua, Zerubbabel, Haggai, and Zechariah belonged passes completely away. "When the curtain lifts again, the chief power among the Jews has passed from the family of David. Zerubbabel was dead; and his sons (1 Chron. 3^{19-20}) had not succeeded him. The disappearance of the royal dynasty, and the marked preponderance of the priestly power in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, have given occasion to the theory that Zerubbabel and his sons fell before the intrigues of a jealous priesthood. But there is no ground for supposing that Zerubbabel's governorship was hereditary. On the contrary, it would be the policy of the Empire to check any tendency towards the rise of dynastic power in the subject provinces. The governors of Jerusalem who succeeded Zerubbabel were, if we may judge from Mal. 1^{8}, Ezra 8^{36}, Neh. 5^{15}, foreigners; and, if foreigners, they would not have sympathized with the policy of religious exclusiveness that had been expressed in the repulse of the Samaritan overtures by Zerubbabel and Joshua." (Ryle.)

A period of religious decay is now exhibited. The priests had become lax in principle, and were foremost offenders in intermarriage with heathen women. The

wealthier Jews were oppressing the poor. The Temple services were not being sustained, tithes were not paid, and offerings were not brought. And so, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes (458 B.C.), Ezra, the priest and scribe, received the royal permission to return from Babylon and superintend the religious community at Jerusalem. His commission is said to have been given to him by the king in writing. It has been suggested that Artaxerxes hoped by this action to strengthen the Persian hold over the Jews in Jerusalem.

Ezra's caravan numbered 1596 men besides a certain number of priests and Levites and Nethinim or Temple slaves. The account of his arrival at the Holy City and of the reforms that he effected is given in Ezra, chaps. 7–10. The narrative concludes abruptly and in an unfinished manner at Ezra 10^{44}, and when it is resumed at Neh. 1^{1} it leaves a gap of fourteen years. What happened during these years is not known, but it is assumed that the Jews came under suspicion of the Persians through some act of a small disloyal party. On this hypothesis, the record of Ezra 4^{7-24} is looked upon as the concluding episode in Ezra's visit. He stopped the work of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem; such fortifications as had been replaced were again destroyed, and he and other leading Jews were probably recalled.

The Book of Nehemiah opens with an account of the commission received by Nehemiah from the Persian king to proceed to Jerusalem and rebuild its walls. Two visits to the ancient capital of Palestine were paid

by this patriot, chaps. 1–12 dealing with the first, and the remaining chapters with the second. The repair of the fortifications, however, did not conclude Nehemiah's work. He concerned himself equally with finding a remedy for the distress occasioned by the oppression of the poor, who, bled by the Persian taxation, were further crushed by their richer brethren. Those unable to pay the Persian taxes were often obliged to borrow money, and for this an extortionate rate of interest was charged; and where there was failure to pay, the creditors seized both lands and children, taking the latter as slaves. Nehemiah took measures also to institute religious principles and to consolidate the reforms started by Ezra. Under his leadership the Law became the great bulwark of the national character, and in the solemn covenant which he established was laid the foundation of later Judaism.

By this covenant the people were bound to submit themselves to the strict observance of the Sabbath and to the observance of the Sabbatical year. They were to acknowledge the illegality of marriages with foreigners, and they were called upon to pay a tax of $\frac{1}{3}$ of a shekel for Temple expenses, and to give tithes and first-fruits to the Levites.

Political and Social Condition of the Jews.

The Jews do not seem to have been severely treated by the Persians, though at the same time they do not appear to have enjoyed prosperity. Probably the sense

of being a subject nation was harder to bear than the actual burdens of taxation and conscription.

Jerusalem under the Persian system was ruled by a pekkah or governor. He was responsible to the satrap, who was a sort of vassal king over a considerable province, and the satrap was responsible to the king, who held absolute power. That the pekkahs might be foreigners is proved by the post being held by Zerubbabel and Nehemiah.

Tribute was paid to the satrap, and was remitted by him to the king. It was payable both in money and in kind, and the heavy burden it imposed upon the Jews is told in Neh. 5^4. Taxes were also paid upon merchandise. And the Jews were required to furnish contingents to the Persian army.

The bad harvests which occurred during the first few years of the restoration, and the hostility of the Samaritans, made matters still more difficult. Nevertheless a considerable trade was carried on, and merchants found a good market in Jerusalem. Special streets in the city were devoted to particular trades, such as the goldsmiths (Neh. $3^{31.\ 32}$) and the perfumers (Neh. 3^8). Twelve per cent. interest appears to have been charged on borrowed money (Neh. 5^{11}), and payments for any commodity could be paid either in money or in kind (Neh. 5^{11}). It is at this time that there is the first mention of coined money in the O.T. The Persian daric, which came into use during the reign of Darius, was a gold coin weighing 130 grains, and having a value approximately that of the British sovereign.

Among themselves the Jews acknowledged the High Priest as their head, for they were a religious community, with the Temple as the centre of their national life. As the High Priesthood was an hereditary office there arose a kind of religious dynasty, and in course of time, after the break up of the Persian Empire, the High Priest became practically a petty Jewish monarch.

Travel in Ancient Times.

There is an Oriental proverb which says : "There are three states of wretchedness—sickness, fasting, and travel." A journey is not a thing to be undertaken lightly or joyfully. Before setting out upon his journey the traveller is counselled to set his affairs in order, to "pay all debts, provide for dependants, give parting gifts, return all articles under trust, take money and good temper for the journey ; then bid farewell to all." That any one could find actual pleasure in travelling is incomprehensible to the Oriental. He knows the roughness of the roads, the heat and the dust, and the "hidden dangers of the way." And so he girds up his loins and takes his staff in his hand only when he has a very definite and practical aim in view.

In the East the road is very often nothing more than a narrow stony track along which asses and mules can walk. It is a bridle-path of this rude character that is generally denoted by the words "way" and "road" in the Old Testament. The hard soil of Palestine forms in itself a sufficiently good foundation to allow the

passage even of wheeled vehicles, and it does not require the conception of an artificially made road to understand how the 900 chariots of Sisera were able to manœuvre in the great plain of Esdraelon.

But, although most of the Biblical "roads" must be thought of as merely natural tracks, there is at the same time evidence that the Israelites had also artificially constructed roads. It is clear, however, that these roads were originally built by the king and for the king's convenience. They are spoken of as "the king's highway," and were repaired according to the king's needs. As in the East at the present day, the royal personage in ancient times sent his messengers before him to call the people together to the work of repairing the roads upon which he intended to travel. The stones brought down by the mountain torrents had to be cleared away, "the crooked made straight, and the rough places plain." But when the immediate need had been served, the roads were allowed, in the usual Oriental manner, to return to their former state.

When the Israelites came to the Land of Promise they were directed to open up roads to the cities of refuge. "Thou shalt prepare thee the way . . . that every manslayer may flee thither" (Deut. 19^3). And probably they were already familiar with the process of road-making through their sojourn in the land of Egypt, where artificial roads were a necessity by nature of the soil in the Delta. According to Josephus, Solomon laid a substantial causeway of black stone (basalt) along the roads leading to Jerusalem, to render

them easy for travellers and " to manifest the grandeur of his riches and government." There is no mention of bridges in the O.T., and it is not likely that the Hebrews built any. Except in times of heavy rain it must have been always possible to cross even the largest streams by the fords.

Most of the journeys of Old Testament times were accomplished on foot, and thus the first attention that hospitable people bestowed on their guests was to set out water for them in which they might wash and cool their feet. Elderly well-to-do people, however, made use of asses as a means of locomotion between neighbouring cities, and also for distant journeys. The she-ass seems to have been preferred for riding, while the he-ass carried the baggage. White asses, which are rarer than those of a reddish colour, were regarded as essentially the mounts of people of high rank. Mules also were used by the wealthy and noble. Carts, two-wheeled, and four-wheeled vehicles of a somewhat primitive and cumbrous character, were used to some extent for conveying heavy goods. In 1 Sam. 6^8 we read that the Philistines placed the ark of the Lord in an ox-cart and set it on the way to Beth-shemesh. Camels were employed for the most part only when the way led through the desert.

Owing to the dangers that beset the solitary traveller, people generally combined to form a large company or caravan, and thus travelled very much in the manner of the modern Bedawîn, with an armed body of men in advance of the column.

In every case, whether alone or with a caravan, the traveller had to provide for his own needs on the journey by bringing his provisions with him. The same holds good to-day. "No traveller in the interior of Syria," says Rihbany, "ever starts out on a journey, be it short or long, without *zad*, that is to say, 'the food for the way.' 'Put up a few loaves for *zad*,' is the first thing said when a person is about to start out on a journey. The thin loaves are folded into small bundles, which may contain such delicacies as ripe black olives, cheese, boiled eggs, and figs conserved in grape molasses, and wrapped up in a large napkin, which the traveller ties around his waist, with the bread on the back. The bread is often carried in a leather bag (*jerab*). This is the 'scrip' and 'wallet' of the Gospel command. On a long journey, say of a day or more, the thin bread dries up and breaks into small pieces. A dry and crumby *zad* indicates a long journey. The Gibeonites certainly 'did work wilily' when they used their dry and broken bread as a means to deceive Joshua. Although they were Israel's near neighbours, by carrying dry crumbs in their bags and saying to Joshua upon their arrival at his camp, 'This our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to go unto you; but now, behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy,' made him and 'the princes of the congregation' believe that the wily travellers had come from a distant country. The English translation, however, by using the word 'mouldy' introduces a foreign element into the text. In the dry climate of Palestine the bread

does not get *mouldy* on a journey, but it dries up and crumbles into small fragments, as every Syrian knows. The Arabic version has it, 'This our bread . . . is now dry and in crumbs [*fetat*].'"

It is true, of course, that wherever the traveller comes upon an inhabited place he can count with certainty upon the hospitality of the people; but he has to provide against the mishaps of desert travel, and the danger of finding the wells dried up through an early drought. The traveller seeking hospitality, when he reached a city at night, took up his stand by the gate and waited to see who would invite him to a night's shelter. Job counts it among the worthy things of his life that "the stranger did not lodge in the street; but I opened my doors to the traveller" (Job 31^{32}). And it is specially noted against the wicked inhabitants of Gibeah that when the Levite came to lodge there "he sat him down in the street of the city; for there was no man that took them into his house to lodge" (Judg. 19^{15}).

THE DEDICATION OF THE ALTAR AND THE FOUNDATION OF THE SECOND TEMPLE.

(Ezra iii.)

The following articles bear upon this section:

Cyrus, King of Persia, p. 185.
Hebrew Music, p. 124.
The Hebrew Calendar, p. 100.
The Feast of Tabernacles, p. 107.
The Second Temple, p. 314.

THE RECORD OF OPPOSITION TO THE RESTORED COMMUNITY.

(Ezra iv.–v.)

The Samaritans.

The Samaritans are best known to us from what is said about them in the Gospels, and most of all from the parable of the Good Samaritan. But they have an interesting history.

When Israel, after the death of Solomon, separated from Judah, Shechem (afterwards called Neapolis, now Nablous) was chosen as the capital of the Northern Kingdom. In 883 B.C., however, Omri built the new city of Samaria and made it the capital of his kingdom. Samaria remained the capital until its capture by the Assyrians in the year 722 B.C., which brought the Kingdom of Israel to an end. All this time the Samaritans were simply the inhabitants of the city of Samaria and the district round it.

In accordance with the custom of the conquering Assyrian kings, the principal inhabitants of Samaria and of most of the cities of Israel were deported by Sargon when Samaria fell, and were settled in distant parts of the great Assyrian empire, while families " from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Avva, and from Hamath and Sepharvaim " were sent to occupy Samaria and the other depopulated cities of Israel. These strangers, soon after their arrival in Palestine, were alarmed by an invasion of lions. They concluded that

it was due to the anger of the local deity, and sent for an Israelite priest to teach them "the way of the god of the land." In course of time they must have intermarried with those of the Israelites who had not been deported, but their religion remained of a mixed character—the worship partly of Yahweh and partly of their own heathen gods.

Then came the fall of the Southern Kingdom, the Kingdom of Judah, and the Babylonian captivity. When the Jews returned from Babylon, the Samaritans wished to join them in the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. But this request was denied, and for a long time the Jews in the south and the Samaritans in the north lived in a state of unfriendliness, which ended at last in open and final rupture. The Samaritans built a rival temple on Mount Gerizim, and secured as their High Priest one Manasseh, a brother of the High Priest Jaddua in Jerusalem. Manasseh was joined by other priests and Levites who had married non-Jewish wives, and he may have carried with him a copy of the Pentateuch. In any case the Samaritans have always possessed an edition of the Pentateuch, which is their only Bible, and which differs in many details from the Hebrew Pentateuch which we have received from the Jews. One of the differences, and the most important, is at Deut. 27^4. There in the Jewish version Moses is commanded to build an altar on Mount Ebal; the Samaritan version has Mount Gerizim instead of Mount Ebal. Thus they claim the direct command of God for their worship "in this mountain," as the woman of

Samaria said to Jesus. From that time until now the Jews have had "no dealings with the Samaritans."

The Samaritans have had a troubled history. Gradually they were reduced to a small religious sect, which now maintains a precarious existence on one side of Nablous, the ancient Shechem. In 1163 Benjamin of Tudela found a thousand still clinging to their sacred mountain; now there are not two hundred.

But they still preserve their ancient beliefs, and jealously guard their copy of the Law, one manuscript of which they claim to have been written by Abisha, the grandson of Aaron. It is probably not older than the tenth century; but no European scholar has ever been allowed to examine it. Other antiquities, however (but they are of still more doubtful genuineness), are freely shown to visitors. On Mount Gerizim the sites of the altars built by Adam and Seth are pointed out, as well as the altar itself built by Noah after the Flood, and that on which Isaac was to have been offered in sacrifice. On Mount Gerizim, too, are shown the stones brought up from the Jordan by Joshua. Near these stones is still celebrated the Samaritan Passover.

THE DECREE OF DARIUS.

(Ezra vi.)

The following articles bear upon this section :

The Second Temple, p. 314.
Cyrus, p. 185.
The Book of Haggai, p. 312.
The Hebrew Calendar, p. 100.
Hebrew Building and Masonry, p. 12.

THE RETURN UNDER EZRA.

(Ezra vii.–x.)

The Hebrew Calendar.

The Hebrew calendar, like the system of weights and measures, was not a very scientific one, for the Hebrews' knowledge of astronomy and mathematics was limited. It was natural for them, as for all primitive nations, to reckon time as divided into days by the rising and setting of the sun, and months by the phases of the moon. And as the recurrent visible phases of the moon corresponded with twenty-eight of the solar days, the separation of the month into four equal weeks followed naturally.

Roughly speaking, the first hour of the day corresponded nearly to our 6 a.m. ; the third hour, when, according to Mt. 20^3, the market-place was full, to our 9 a.m. ; the sixth hour, to our midday ; while at the eleventh the day neared its close. The Romans reckoned the hours from midnight, a fact which explains

the apparent discrepancy between Jn. 19[14], where, at the sixth hour (of Roman calculation), Pilate brought Jesus out to the Jews, while at the third hour of the Jewish and hence the ninth of the Roman and of our calculation, He was led forth to be crucified. The night was divided by the Romans into four, by the Jews into three, watches. The Jews subdivided the hour into 1080 parts, and again each part into seventy-six moments.

The week was divided into seven days, only one of which had a name—the Sabbath—the rest being denoted by numbers. In the Apocrypha (Judith 8[6]) there is a name for Friday which is translated "the eve of the Sabbath" (cf. Mark 15[42]), a day also called "the Preparation" in Mt. 27[62], etc.—a name still used by the Roman Church for Good Friday.

The month was ushered in by the appearance of the new moon, and here a difficulty arose; for if the day happened to be cloudy every one might not see the moon, and as the times of the sacred feasts depended upon the accurate observance of this phenomenon, the Sanhedrin used to sit in the "Hall of Polished Stones" to receive the testimony of credible witnesses that they had seen the new moon; and, to encourage as many as possible to come forward, these witnesses were handsomely entertained at the public expense. When the fact was determined men were sent at once to a signal station on the Mount of Olives, where beacons were lit, kindling flames on other hilltops, which carried on the signal even beyond the boundaries of Palestine,

to the Jews of the dispersion " beyond the river." But as the enemies of the Jews sometimes lit beacons to deceive those at a distance, special messengers were sent seven times a year to announce the new moon and ensure a correct intimation of the various feasts.

Twelve months went to each year, the calendar being as follows :

First month. Nisan or Abib	The first month of the ecclesiastical year, corresponding to the end of March and the beginning of April. This was the month in which the Passover came, and the month of the " latter " rains, which watered the growing crops.
Second month. Ziv or Iyyar	April to May, the " month of splendour "; cf. Lk. 12^{27}.
Third month. Sivan	May to June. The rain now ceases for about five months, the flowers disappear and the grass withers. The Feast of Pentecost or of Weeks occurred in this month. It was also commemorative of the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai.
Fourth month. Tammuz	June to July. The name does not occur in the Bible. It is derived from the Babylonian deity in whose honour a feast was kept during the month. Zech. 8^{19} 12^{10} and Amos 8^{10} are believed to be references to this custom. It was in this month that Nebuchadrezzar and Titus captured Jerusalem on the ninth and seventeenth days respectively.
Fifth month. Ab	July to August. The summer heat is now at its maximum in Palestine. The month is celebrated by modern Jews by a fast for the threefold destruction of the Temple. The name Ab does not occur in the Bible.

Sixth month. Elul	August to September. The month of the dreaded sirocco or desert wind.
Seventh month. Ethanim or Tishri	September to October; the first month of the civil year. The early rains begin in this month, and it is the beginning, too, of the vintage. In some respects this was the most sacred of all the months. The first day was the Feast of Trumpets; the tenth was the Great Day of Atonement; and the fifteenth the Feast of Booths.
Eighth month. Bul or Marcheshvan	October to November. Ploughing commences. A month of heavy rain.
Ninth month. Chislev	November to December. It was on the fifteenth of this month, 168 B.C., that the Temple was profaned and the altar polluted by Antiochus Epiphanes; and on the twenty-fifth of this month, three years later, Judas Maccabæus celebrated the Dedication or Purification of the Temple, which was afterwards observed as an annual festival (John 10^{22}).
Tenth month. Tebeth	December to January. The name is taken from the Assyrian, and is conjectured to mean the month of mud.
Eleventh month. Shebat	January to February. The month of severest cold, darkest days, and heaviest rain. Snow falls on Lebanon.
Twelfth month. Adar	February to March. In this month shower and sunshine alternate rapidly, so that the Arabs call it "the one-eyed," *i.e.* a face dark on one side and bright on the other. They also say of it that it has no rules. It is the month of almond blossom. The Feast of Purim starts on the fourteenth day.

These months being lunar, the year consisted of only 354 days 8 hours, so to avoid the automatic rotation of

the months through the solar year (as is the Mohammedan practice) the Hebrews introduced an intercalary period every three years, which they called the thirteenth month or second Adar. It was a device comparable to our own added day to February in leap year. It was determined by an inspection of the barley fields towards the close of the twelfth month with a view to securing enough ripe ears for the first fruits to be offered by the sixteenth day of the next moon (Lev. $23^{10.\ 11}$).

NEHEMIAH'S FIRST VISIT TO JERUSALEM.

(Neh. i. 1–ii. 10.)

Persia.

Originally Persia was but a small province bounded on the north by Media, on the south by the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, on the east by Caramania (Kerman), and on the west by Susiana, and measured roughly 250 by 450 miles. Its inhabitants were a southern branch of the Iranians who had migrated about 1000–900 B.C. from Turkestan. For a long time these people were subject to the Medes, from whom they were separated by Elam until *circa* 600 B.C., when they acquired that country. Little is known of Persian history, however, until the time of Cambyses, the father of Cyrus, and it was under the latter's reign that Persia acquired a chief place in the Middle East. For the career of this distinguished monarch see art. p. 185. It is sufficient now to state that he threw off the Median

yoke 550 B.C., captured the kingdom of Lydia 545 B.C., and Babylon in 539. Thus was founded the great Persian Empire.

That empire was shortlived. Cyrus reigned for a time in conjunction with his son Cambyses, and was succeeded, with an interval of one king not mentioned in Scripture, by Darius I. (521–485 B.C.). This was the monarch to whom the appeal was made for a permit to restore the ruined Temple of Jerusalem (Ezra 5). He was followed by Xerxes I., the Ahasuerus of Esther, and the man whose aid was invoked by the Samaritans to hinder that restoration (Ezra 4^{6}); and he, in turn, was succeeded by Artaxerxes I. Longimanus, the king to whom Nehemiah was cup-bearer. After that there were six Persian kings, who are not referred to in the O.T., until Darius III. ascended the throne in 335 B.C. He is spoken of as reigning at the time of the Levitical register mentioned in Neh. 12^{22}, and it was while he was on the throne that the Persian Empire fell before Alexander the Great.

The Persian king ruled as a despot, and nothing is commoner in the inscriptions of these monarchs than the assertion of their supreme dominion over the whole world, "King of Countries" being one of their favourite titles. So in Ezra 1^{2}, "Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord, the God of heaven, given me." Certainly the Persian Empire was enormous in extent, for it included Afghanistan on the east, and Asia Minor on the west; to the north it stretched to the Caucasus, and on the south it actually

numbered Egypt as one of its provinces. Its royal capitals were Persepolis in Persia (not mentioned in Scripture), Babylon on the Euphrates, Susa or Shushan in Susiana or Elam, and Ecbatana in Media. Details of the organization of the Empire are given in the article on the Books of Nehemiah and Ezra, p. 85.

The religion of the Persians in so far as it was formulated by Zoroaster, 800 B.C., was monotheistic, the central teaching being expressed in the phrase, "There is only one God, and no other is to be compared to Him"; and the creed associated therewith was conveyed in the simple declaration, "Perform good actions and refrain from evil ones." Zoroaster recognized the existence of two powerful agencies: the good, represented by fire and light, and the evil, represented by charred wood and darkness.

The sacred writings of the ancient Persians were contained in the *Zend Avesta*. The original is supposed to have been destroyed during the invasion of Alexander the Great, or immediately afterwards, on the conquest of the country by the Arabs; but existing copies show that the books which made up the Persian Bible were a mixture of ethical rules and prayers, with astrology, philosophy, and the natural sciences. The descriptions of "heaven" and of "hell" offer some resemblance to the vision of St. John. This religious system lost its influence when the Persian Empire fell, though it still survives among the modern Parsees.

THE BUILDING OF THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM.

(Neh. ii. 11–vii. 73.)

The following articles bear upon this section :

Hebrew Building and Masonry, p. 12.
Jerusalem, p. 70.
The Samaritans, p. 97.
The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, p. 85.

THE RELIGIOUS REFORMS OF NEHEMIAH AND THE CELEBRATION OF THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

(Neh. viii.)

The Feast of Tabernacles.

The Feast of Tabernacles was the most joyous festival in the Hebrew Calendar, for it synchronized with the season of thankfulness, when the crops had been stored, the fruit gathered, and the vintage was over. It was, in fact, the prototype of the modern harvest-thanksgiving, and so it was also spoken of as the " Feast of Ingathering," and sometimes as the " Feast of Yahweh," since the land was peculiarly His. The feast was also a commemoration of the wandering in the wilderness, and this was the significance of the tabernacles or booths. It fell on the fifteenth of the seventh month, that is, in the autumn (see art. Hebrew Calendar, p. 100), and it lasted seven days.

Three things specially marked the Feast of Tabernacles: (*a*) its joyous character; (*b*) the dwelling of the people in "tabernacles," or "booths"; and (*c*) its significant ritual.

(*a*) The note of joy and thankfulness is sounded in Deut. 16^{13-17}: "Thou shalt keep the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in from thy threshing-floor and from thy winepress: and thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates. Seven days shalt thou keep a feast unto the Lord thy God in the place which the Lord shall choose: because the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the work of thine hands, and thou shalt be altogether joyful. Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the Lord empty: every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee."

(*b*) The second injunction occurs in Lev. $23^{42.\ 43}$, "ye shall dwell in booths seven days," and subsequent legislation enacted that the booths should be constructed of the boughs of living trees, and that they should be at least ten handbreadths in height. Such booths were to be real dwellings, where the people would eat, sleep,

pray, and study, and only such excuses as sickness or some equal emergency were admitted as valid reasons for refusal to conform. Worshippers also carried small branches in their hands—in the left hand a citron bough, and in the right a bunch of palm, myrtle, and willow. Even the children carried these symbols.

(*c*) The ritual of the Feast was peculiar because of the number of sacrifices involved, and by the fact that their number progressively diminished from the first to the seventh day. While the morning sacrifice was being prepared (see art. RITUAL OF SACRIFICE, vol. I. p. 118), a priest went down to the Pool of Siloam accompanied by a musical procession, and drew therefrom about two pints of water in a golden vessel. Returning by the Water Gate (which, according to Edersheim, obtained its name from this ceremony), he ascended the altar and, mixing the water with the wine of the drink offering, poured the two into the altar basin. In later days, as he did this the people shouted "Raise thy hand," so that they might see that the rite was properly carried out, for about 95 B.C. the priest had poured the offering on the ground as a token of contempt, and a riot had ensued, in which no fewer than 6000 Jews were said to have been killed.

As soon as the libation was poured out the "Hallel" (Ps. 113–118) was sung, and at the words "O give thanks unto the Lord" the worshippers shook the branches they were carrying. It was possibly at this point in the ceremonial that Christ "stood and cried . . . If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink"

(John 7^{37}). In the evening the Temple was illuminated (cf. John 8^{12}; cf. also Rev. $7^{9.10}$).

Jerusalem must have presented a very picturesque appearance with hundreds of booths built in courtyards and on housetops, and an equally desolate one when, on the afternoon of the seventh day, the work of stripping began. For on the eighth day they lived no longer in these temporary arbours, nor did worshippers carry any branches. That day was observed as a "holy convocation," and the festive sacrifices prescribed in Num. 29^{36-38} were offered.

THE SOLEMN COVENANT.

(Neh. ix.–x.)

The following articles bear upon the verses specified:

Neh. 9^{1} Hebrew Funerary and Mourning Customs, p. 198.
9^{3} Ancient Books, p. 215.
10^{32} Hebrew Weights and Measures, p. 151.

THE NEW ORGANIZATION.

(Neh. xi.–xiii.)

The following articles bear upon the verses specified:

Neh. $12^{27.28}$ Hebrew Music, p. 124.
13^{1} Ancient Books, p. 215.
13^{6} Persia, p. 104.

ESTHER.

The Feast of Purim.

The Feast of Purim, that is of "lots," or "The Feast of Esther," also called in 2 Macc. 15^{36} "The Day of Mordecai," was instituted, and is still observed, to commemorate the preservation of the Jewish nation at the time of Esther. The name "Purim" is supposed to be derived from the plural of "Pur," the lot which Haman cast as recorded in Est. 3^{7} 9^{15-32}. The observance of this festival was probably not at first universal, but Josephus mentions its occurrence, and it held an established position before the time of Christ. It was probably the "feast of the Jews" in Jerusalem to which the Saviour went when He healed the impotent man at the Pool of Bethesda (Jn. 5^{1}), for no other feast save that of the Dedication of the Temple could have intervened between December and the Passover (cf. Jn. 4^{35} 6^{4}), and the Feast of the Dedication is expressly designated as such when referred to (Jn. 10^{22}).

At first no special religious services were enjoined to mark the Feast of Purim, nor was there any prohibition of labour. It was a time of feasting and joy, and of the exchange of presents and the giving of alms. In later times it was celebrated by a synagogue meeting

on the evening of the 13th Adar and the morning of the 14th (see art. HEBREW CALENDAR, p. 100). As the Roll was unfolded the story of Esther was read, the congregation repeating in loud and triumphant tones the passages relating to the victory of the Jews over their enemies, while at the mention of Haman's name the assembly, and especially the younger portion, hissed, stamped, shook the clenched fist, and pounded noisily on the benches, saying, "Let his name be blotted out," "Let the name of the wicked perish." Moreover, it was customary for the reader to utter the names of Haman's ten sons in one breath, in allusion, it was said, to their all dying at the same moment. In the Jewish rolls the names of the sons were written in three vertical and parallel lines of three, three, and four words, to indicate that the ten were hanged on three parallel cords.

At the conclusion of the reading the whole congregation exclaimed, "Cursed be Haman, blessed be Mordecai; cursed be Zeresh, blessed be Esther; cursed be all idolaters, blessed be all Israelites; and blessed be Harbonah, who hanged Haman." Many of these customs continue, and sometimes an effigy of Haman is made and burnt by the Jewish children after the manner of a Guy Fawkes.

THE POETICAL AND WISDOM BOOKS.

JOB.

The Book of Job.

The Book of Job is a dramatic poem. It is not a drama of action, written to be represented in a theatre; it is a static drama, its dramatic character consisting in the development of thought. After the Prologue, which does not belong to the drama proper, there is no action whatever. Job and his three friends sit there in conversation; it is the conversation itself that is put in dramatic form.

"The speeches follow one another, rising and falling, in rise and fall magnificently and deliberately eloquent. Not a limb is seen to move, unless it be when Job half rises from the dust in sudden scorn of their conventions:

> "'No doubt but *ye* are the people,
> And wisdom shall die with you!'

"The poem is full of interest, both local and universal. Turn to the Prologue. The Prologue is put into the mouth of a Narrator. 'There was a man in the land of Uz, named Job; upright, God-fearing, of great

substance in sheep, cattle, and oxen; blest also with seven sons and three daughters.' After telling of their family life, how wholesome it is, and pious, and happy, the Prologue passes to a Council held in Heaven. The Lord sits there, and the sons of God present themselves each from his province. Enters Satan (whom we had better call the Adversary) from his sphere of inspection, the Earth, and reports. The Lord specially questions him concerning Job, pattern of men. The Adversary demurs. 'Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast thou not set a hedge about his prosperity? But put forth thy hand and touch all that he hath, and he will renounce thee to thy face.' The Lord gives leave for this trial to be made. The trial fails: Job holds fast to his integrity. A second Council is held in Heaven; and the Adversary, being questioned, has to admit Job's integrity, but proposes a severer test: 'Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will renounce thee to thy face.' Again leave is given: and the Adversary smites Job with the most hideous and loathsome form of leprosy. His kinsfolk (as we learn later) have already begun to desert and hold aloof from him as a man marked out by God's displeasure. But now he passes out from their midst, as one unclean from head to foot, and seats himself on the ash-mound—that is, upon the Mezbele or heap of refuse which accumulates outside Arab villages.

"'The dung,' says Professor Moulton, 'which is

heaped upon the Mezbele of the Hauran villages, is not mixed with straw, which in that warm and dry land is not needed for litter, and it comes mostly from solid-hoofed animals, as the flocks and oxen are left over-night in the grazing places. It is carried in baskets in a dry state to this place . . . and usually burnt once a month. . . . The ashes remain. . . . If the village has been inhabited for centuries the Mezbele reaches a height far overtopping it. The winter rains reduce it into a compact mass, and it becomes by and by a solid hill of earth. . . . The Mezbele serves the inhabitants for a watch-tower, and in the sultry evenings for a place of concourse, because there is a current of air on the height. There all day long the children play about it; and there the outcast, who has been stricken with some loathsome malady, and is not allowed to enter the dwellings of men, lays himself down, begging an alms of the passers-by by day, and by night sheltering himself among the ashes which the heat of the sun has warmed.'

" Here, then, sits in his misery 'the forsaken grandee'; and here yet another temptation comes to him—this time not expressly allowed by the Lord. Much foolish condemnation has been heaped on Job's wife. As a matter of fact she is *not* a wicked woman—she has borne her part in the pious and happy family life, now taken away: she has uttered no word of complaint though all the substance be swallowed up and her children with it. But now the sight of her innocent husband thus helpless, thus incurably smitten, wrings,

through love and anguish and indignation, this cry from her: Dost thou still hold fast thine integrity? renounce God, and die. But Job answered, soothing her: Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? So the second trial ends, and Job has sinned not with his lips.

"But now comes the third trial, which needs no Council in Heaven to decree it. Travellers by the mound saw this figure seated there, patient, uncomplaining, an object of awe even to the children who at first mocked him; asked this man's history; and hearing of it, smote on their breasts, and made a token of it and carried the news into far countries: until it reached the ears of Job's three friends, all great tribesmen like himself—Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. These three made an appointment together to travel and visit Job. 'And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice and wept.' Then they went up and sat down opposite him on the ground. But the majesty of suffering is silent:

> "'Here I and sorrows sit;
> Here is my throne, bid kings come bow to it. . . .'

"No, not a word. . . . And, with the grave courtesy of Eastern men, they too are silent. So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great. The Prologue ends. The scene

is set. After seven days of silence the real drama opens." [1]

What is the subject? It is the problem of suffering, and in particular the undeserved suffering of the righteous. Job's three friends share the common opinion of their day—that suffering comes direct from God, that it is a punishment for sin, and that therefore every one who suffers must be guilty of open or secret transgression. Job himself has been of the same mind till now. That is to say, he has held that prosperity was the sign of the favour of God, adversity of His displeasure. But he indignantly refuses to admit the conclusion of his friends that he, Job, since he has suffered adversity, must be a bad man. They argue with him at great length, but to no purpose; he holds fast to his innocence. When they are silenced another and younger man, who has listened in indignation to the failure of Job's friends to convict him of sin, breaks out into passionate speech, condemning Job and his three friends together, but adding nothing material to the argument.

The book is anonymous and no one has ever discovered who wrote it. That he was a great literary artist is evident. For, while he himself lived (as all the evidence shows) after the Captivity, he places the drama in the time of the Patriarchs and throws round it a patriarchal atmosphere, some of the very words he uses being antiquated; just as the poet Spenser used an older form of speech in his *Fairy Queen*. Whether

[1] Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, *On the Art of Reading*, pp. 187–191.

the characters are historical or not is doubtful. Most students of the book conclude that they are, or that at least the principal character is, for Job is mentioned by Ezekiel as one of three men who were traditionally regarded as especially righteous before God.

PSALMS.

The Temple Hymn Book.

The Book of Psalms is a collection of sacred poems intended, for the most part, to be sung to a musical accompaniment. Their history is obscure, but it is generally conceded that they represent a complex literary development. Ancient custom divided the Psalter into five books : Bk. 1, Ps. 1–41 ; Bk. 2, Ps. 42–72 ; Bk. 3, Ps. 73–89 ; Bk. 4, Ps. 90–106 ; Bk. 5, Ps. 107–150, and the Midrash, an old Jewish commentary, declared that " Moses gave the Israelites the Five Books of the Law, and to correspond to these David gave them the Book of Psalms containing five Books." It is considered probable that this division of the Psalter into five parts was done to effect a similarity with the Pentateuch. The fact that the collection as it is printed in our A.V. is not the original order of the Psalms is evident from the statement at the close of Ps. 72, " the prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended," for Pss. 86 and 142 are entitled Prayers of David, while several subsequent Psalms besides these two, though not actually prayers, are ascribed to his authorship.

To many of the Psalms there are prefixed titles which designate the character of the poem, matters relating to their musical setting or liturgical use, and the occasions on which or for which they were written. A large number of the titles are obscure.

Fifty-five of the Psalms are entitled "For the Chief Musician." The term is understood to refer to the Precentor or Conductor of the Temple Choir, *i.e.* the one who trained and led the singers. Those who agree with the correctness of the preposition "for" consider that the title meant that the Psalm was to be handed over to the Precentor for its musical setting and performance. Others maintain that the preposition should be "of," and consider that such Psalms belonged to the Precentor's special collection.

Psalm 5 is inscribed "For the Chief Musician with the Nehiloth." Flutes are possibly meant; cf. Is. 30^{29}, 1 Sam. 10^{5}, and 1 Kings 1^{40}.

Flutes or reed pipes were played in the Temple on twelve special festivities, viz. the day of killing the first and that of killing the second Passover; the first day of unleavened bread; Pentecost; and the eight days of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Another direction is "For the Chief Musician, on stringed instruments set to the Sheminith"; cf. 1 Chron. 15^{19-21}. "So the singers . . . were appointed . . . with psalteries set to Alamoth . . . and . . . with harps set to the Sheminith, to lead."

The usual meaning of Sheminith is "eighth," *i.e.* an octave. And as the parallel expression "set to Ala-

moth" means "set to the maidens" it is inferred that the former is a bass setting, and the alamoth a soprano setting. Both words occur several times in the Psalms.

Psalm 7 is called "Shiggaion of David." The meaning of this term has never been elucidated. The plural of the word occurs in Hab. 3^1, and the root of the word means "to wander." It has, therefore, been suggested that such a song was to be rendered with wild, ecstatic, rapidly changing rhythm.

Three Psalms (8, 81, 84) are marked "set to the Gittith." The word is a feminine adjective derived from Gath, and may mean some Gittite instrument or melody. The word, however, may have been "Gittoth," the plural of "gath," meaning a winepress, in which case the note may be a direction for the Psalm to be sung at the vintage season.

Six Psalms are designated "Michtam of David." A number of suggestions as to the significance of this name have been offered. Delitzsch explains it as "a poem of epigrammatic character." The Rabbis declared the expression to mean a "golden poem."

"Maschil" is another obscure title which is affixed to thirteen of the Psalms. Kirkpatrick suggests that it means "a musical setting of a specially delicate and artistic character."

Three of the Psalms are "for Jeduthun." The name occurs in 1 Chron. 25^1 as belonging to one of the three musical guilds. Such a title, and the common ones of "Of the sons of Korah," and "of Asaph," are possibly indications of psalm books comparable to our modern

hymn books. The terms "Shoshannim" (Pss. 45 and 69), "Shushan Eduth" (Ps. 60), and "Shoshannim Eduth" (Ps. 80) are considered to denote the melody to which the Psalms were sung.

A few titles refer to the liturgical use of the Psalms. Thus in the time of the Second Temple a special Psalm was appointed for each day at the hour of the morning sacrifice, as, *e.g.*, Ps. 92, "A song for the Sabbath day." In the Septuagint several such instances occur, such as Ps. 48, "to the second day," Ps. 94, "to the fourth day," etc. The title of Pss. 38 and 70, "to bring to remembrance," possibly indicates that they were sung at the offering of incense (cf. Lk. $1^{9.10}$). Similarly, Ps. 100, "A Psalm of thanksgiving," R.V.m. "for the thankoffering," was probably sung when thankofferings were made. Other national customs reflected in the titles are referred to under the separate Psalms.

"What was the object with which the Psalter was compiled? It is often spoken of as 'the hymn book of the Second Temple,' and it is assumed that it was intended for use in public worship. But it has not the appearance of a collection of hymns made exclusively for liturgical purposes, and there is no evidence that it was so used as a whole in the Jewish Church down to the Christian era. Many of the Psalms were no doubt written expressly for use in public worship, either in celebration of particular events, or for general use; and many not written with this special object are well adapted for it. But many were clearly not originally intended for this purpose, and could only be so used

by a process of accommodation. Some Psalms are the outpouring of the heart to God in the most intimate personal communion, in supplication, confession, thanksgiving, praise, springing out of the needs and aspirations of the soul in the crises of life, and adapted primarily for private devotion rather than for public worship. Some are of a didactic character, intended for instruction and edification, and to be read or learnt rather than sung. The object of the compilers of the Psalter would seem to have been by no means simply liturgical, but partly to unite and preserve existing collections of religious poetry, partly to provide a book of religious devotion, public and private." (Kirkpatrick.) The Psalms represent the inward and spiritual side of the religion of Israel. "There are frequent references to the Temple as the central place of worship, where men appear before God, and where He specially reveals His power, glory, and goodness, and interprets the ways of His Providence."

The impressive splendour of the priestly array is alluded to. The delight of the festal pilgrimages to Zion is vividly described. Consuming zeal for God's house in a corrupt age characterized the saint and exposed him to persecution (Ps. 69^{9}).

"The joyous character of the O.T. worship is so striking a feature of the Psalter as scarcely to need special notice. The Psalter as the hymn book of the Second Temple was entitled 'The Book of Praises.' We hear the jubilant songs of the troops of pilgrims (Ps. 42^{4}; cf. Is. 30^{29}); we see the processions to the

Temple, with minstrels and singers (Ps. $68^{24.\ 25}$); we hear its courts resound with shouts of praise ($95^{1ff.}$ $100^{1.\ 4}$), and music of harp and psaltery, timbrel and trumpet, cymbals and pipe (Ps. 150)." (Kirkpatrick.)

As stated in the article on Hebrew music, the service of praise was sustained mainly by the human voice. "A good voice was the one qualification needful for a Levite. In the Second Temple female singers seem at one time to have been employed. In the Temple of Herod their place was supplied by Levite boys. Nor did the worshippers any more take part in the praise, except by a responsive Amen. It was otherwise in the First Temple, as we gather from 1 Chron. 16^{36}, from the allusion in Jer. 33^{11}, and also from such Psalms as 26^{12} 68^{26}. At the laying of the foundation of the Second Temple, and at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, the singing seems to have been antiphonal, or in responses, the two choirs afterwards apparently combining, and singing in unison in the Temple itself. Something of the same kind was probably also the practice in the First Temple. What the melodies were to which the Psalms had been sung, it is, unfortunately, now impossible to ascertain. Some of the music still used in the synagogue must date from those times, and there is no reason to doubt that in the so-called Gregorian tones we have also preserved to us a close approximation to the ancient hymnody of the Temple, though certainly not without considerable alterations." (Edersheim.)

Hebrew Music.

All Oriental people are passionately fond of music; but because their musical scale is different from our own, the tones they produce are not generally acceptable to Western ears, and cannot be exactly reproduced in our musical notation. They divide their sounds into quarter tones, giving the impression of a minor key, and they often adopt in singing the intonations of ordinary speech. They also delight in repetition, three or four notes sufficing for several lines of a song; and when on the road the camel and donkey drivers will sing a single phrase of perhaps only three words for an hour at a time. As these modes are universal in the East it is probable that they represent the type of music which is referred to in the pages of Scripture.

The development of Hebrew music was essentially religious, poetry and music being, in fact, the only arts developed by them, for they were the only forms whose models were not sought for in the phenomena of physical nature. Music stood aloof from all emblematic representation and became the connecting link between man and his Creator. Such an exalted sphere was never assigned to it by any other ancient civilized people, and it was not until Christianity had asserted itself and become disseminated throughout the world that music again laid claim to this elevated position. It is true that music is referred to in the Bible as an accompaniment to feasting, as in Amos 6^5, and in procession

(1 Sam. 18^6) ; but for the most part it was used religiously either as a stimulus to prophetic utterance (cf. 1 Sam. 10^5 ; see also art. HEBREW PROPHETS, p. 234) or in the Temple services, and it was particularly in the latter sphere that it reached its fullest development.

The service of praise would appear to have been sustained chiefly by the human voice. In the Second Temple female singers seem to have been employed, the title "Set to Alamoth," R.V., which is found in Ps. 46, apparently meaning "in the manner of maidens," or "for maidens' voices : soprano."

The title to Pss. 6 and 12, "set to the Sheminith" (R.V.), possibly denotes that the setting was to be on a lower octave, *i.e.* for tenor or bass. At the same time harmony was practically unknown, and voices would sing in unison. The actual melodies are unfortunately lost, but it is probable that long monotonous recitations on a single note would often be indulged in. Many Psalms were sung antiphonally, *e.g.* Pss. 13, 20, 38, 68, and 89.

The instruments used were of three classes : strings, wind, and tympani. Of the first the most important were the "kinnor" and "nebel" (R.V. harp, psaltery), now represented by the "kanoon" of the Arabs. The modern performer of the kanoon lays the instrument on his knees and strikes the chords with a horn plectrum fixed on the forefingers of each hand. Various forms of this instrument are pictured on the monuments, one of which is played vertically like our modern harp. Possibly this variety is meant by the "sackbut"

(Dan. 3^5), but the types referred to in the O.T. have not yet been precisely identified. Some readers consider the "viol" or "psaltery" and the "instrument of ten strings" of Pss. 92^3 and 144^9 to have been a kind of violoncello.

Of wind instruments there was the reed pipe, which was played in the Temple at special festivals. It was probably a simple flute with holes stopped by the fingers and without keys. It was used by the pilgrim bands on their way to Jerusalem, to accompany the "Songs of Degrees" or "Ascents" (Is. 30^{29}), and it was customary to play it at marriage feasts and funerals (Mt. 9^{23}), for, according to Rabbinical law, every Jew was bound to provide at least two flutes and one mourning woman at the funeral of his wife. The flute was also played in the processions to and from the high places (1 Sam. 10^5, 1 Kings 1^{40}), while in Is. 5^{12} it is recorded that the feasts of drunkards were enlivened by it.

The "organ" (R.V. "the pipe") of Ps. 150^4 was probably a sort of "Pan's pipes." A type of bagpipe is also believed to have been used.

Other wind instruments were in the form of horns and trumpets, the former being curved ram's horns and the latter long straight metal instruments pictured on the Arch of Titus as among the Temple treasures looted by the Romans in 74 A.D. These instruments had loud penetrating tones, and were used for signalling the times of sacrifices and festivals. They are still employed by the Jews.

Percussion instruments were varied. The "toph,"

" tabret," or " timbrel " was a small hand drum of the size and shape of a pudding basin. It is still used in the East. Some identify the " timbrel " with the tambourine. The cymbals were of two kinds : one the shape used to-day, and the other made of two cones with handles at the apices. Castanets were also employed.

The full musical service of the Temple is thus described by Dr. Edersheim : " It was the duty of the priests, who stood on the right and the left of the marble table on which the fat of the sacrifices was laid, at the proper time to blow the blasts on their silver trumpets. There might not be less than two nor more than 120 in this service ; the former in accordance with the original institution, the latter not to exceed the number at the dedication of the First Temple. The priests faced the people, looking eastwards, while the Levites, who crowded the fifteen steps which led from the Court of Israel to that of the Priests, turned westwards to the sanctuary. On a signal given by the president, the priests moved forward to each side of him who struck the cymbals. Immediately the choir of the Levites, accompanied by instrumental music, began the Psalm of the day. It was sustained by not less than twelve voices, with which mingled the delicious treble from selected voices of young sons of the Levites, who, standing by their fathers, might take part in this service alone. The number of instrumental performers was not limited, nor yet confined to the Levites, some of the distinguished families which had intermarried

with the priests being admitted to this service. The Psalm of the day was always sung in three sections. At the close of each the priests drew three blasts from their silver trumpets, and the people bowed down and worshipped. This closed the morning service. The evening service was similar in character.

"The following was the order of the Psalms in the daily service of the Temple. On the first day of the week they sang Ps. 24, 'The earth is the Lord's,' etc., in commemoration of the first day of creation, when 'God possessed the world, and ruled in it.' On the second day they sang Ps. 48, 'Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised,' etc., because on the second day of creation 'the Lord divided His works, and reigned over them.' On the third day they sang Ps. 82, 'God standeth in the congregation of the mighty,' etc., 'because on that day the earth appeared, on which are the Judge and the judged.' On the fourth day Ps. 94 was sung, 'O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth,' etc., 'because on the fourth day God made the sun, moon, and stars, and will be avenged on those that worship them.' On the fifth day they sang Ps. 81, 'Sing aloud unto God our strength,' etc., 'because of the variety of creatures made that day to praise His name.' On the sixth day Ps. 93 was sung, 'The Lord reigneth,' etc., 'because on that day God finished His works and made man, and the Lord ruled over all His works.' Lastly, on the Sabbath day they sang Ps. 92, 'It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord,' etc., 'because the Sabbath was symbolical of the millennial kingdom at the end of the 6000 years'

dispensation, when the Lord would reign over all, and His glory and service fill the earth with thanksgiving.' "

PROVERBS.

Hebrew Wisdom.

Before the Exile "Wisdom" played a relatively small part in religion, and the vital and progressive religious spirit found its full expression in prophecy. But as prophecy decayed and became exhausted, wisdom gradually took its place until in the post-Exilic days, between the time of the Restoration and the time of Christ, this new feature in the Hebrew religious life became pre-eminent, and the priest and the sage usurped the functions of the prophets of old.

The great literary landmarks of the "Wisdom" teaching in the Old Testament are the Books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Job, and, in the Old Testament Apocrypha, the Books of Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon, all of which were written in the latter half of the Persian period and in the Greek period of Jewish history.

Proverbial literature has always been more highly esteemed in the East than in Western countries, and proverbs are still extensively used by Oriental nations in daily conversation, in commercial dealings, and in moral and religious teaching. This is to be partly explained by their reverence for antiquity, for the proverb has been called "Patriarchal government in

the region of ethics," and the authority gained by its passage through the ages renders it peculiarly acceptable to the Eastern mind. A proverb is a "parable of the ancients," and if used appropriately is always regarded as carrying great weight in any controversy.

The form in which a proverb was expressed was very variable. In the Bible, for example, there is no essential difference between a proverb and a parable, and the two words are sometimes used synonymously. As a rule the special feature of a proverb was its brevity, while rhythmic measure was also studied, that the saying might be more easily memorized. Occasionally an element of mystery (always dear to the Oriental mind) was introduced, in which case the proverb was spoken of as a "dark saying," the utterance of which was believed to be a special mark of the sage or wise man.

"It appears," says Currie Martin, "as if the traditional source of the Hebrew wisdom were the land of Edom, for in Jer. 49[7] we read, in an oracle that refers to that nation, 'Is wisdom no more in Teman? is counsel perished from the prudent? is their wisdom vanished?' And again in Obadiah, verse 8, we have the words, 'Shall I not . . . destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?' From this quarter also the Book of Job brings his friends who are the supporters of the traditional wisdom. Just what significance is to be attached to these hints it is not easy to determine, but if recent speculation as to the sources of the Israelitish nation being discoverable in the district to which Edom belongs

are correct, then we may see in these passages a witness on the part of her teachers to the real sources of her later knowledge. In Ezek. 28^3 there is a reference to the great wisdom of Tyre, an indication that in matters of practical wisdom and commercial prudence, which are subjects largely dealt with in the Book of Proverbs, the kingdom of Tyre may well have been one of Israel's greatest instructors."

The Book of Proverbs is an instruction book primarily intended for the young man, a book which will mould his character by means of maxims and allegories containing the essence of wisdom. In the later book of Ecclesiasticus we find references to the sages as public instructors, such as, "If thou seest a man of understanding, get thee betimes unto him, and let thy foot wear out the steps of his doors." Possibly such professional teachers accepted fees for their instruction, for this is indicated in Ecclesiasticus 51^{28}, "Get you instruction with a great sum of silver."

ECCLESIASTES.

Koheleth.

The Hebrew name of this book is Koheleth, a *nom de plume* adopted by its author. The name Koheleth is generally understood to mean "one who speaks in an assembly," and "professor" or "lecturer" has been suggested as its nearest English equivalent. The title Ecclesiastes given to the book in the Septuagint

is an attempt on the part of the Greek translators to interpret this Hebrew name, and is to be understood as "one who addresses an Ecclesia"—*Ecclesia* being the Greek word for an assembly.

The writer gives us a certain amount of information about himself. He was evidently a Jew of wealth and position, having means to provide himself with every luxury. But he had suffered many sorrows and disappointments, and he was now well on in years. He lived in or near Jerusalem at a troubled time in its history, for the king was a child, and the court was given over to feasting and drunkenness. All this may not be sufficient indication of the period in which he wrote; but from the general historical background of the book, its philosophic tone, and its language, we may conclude that it is late post-Exilic. Scholars are nearly unanimous in the opinion that it was written in the beginning of the second century B.C.

Ecclesiastes had considerable difficulty in making its way into the Canon, chiefly no doubt on account of its pessimistic tone, together with its materialistic tendencies. For the book is essentially pessimistic; it begins with Vanity of Vanities and it ends in the same strain. To this observer nature presents itself as a constantly recurring series of events in which there is no evidence of progress. The thing that is, is the thing that has been, and that will be again. "It all issues in nothing new; history is without meaning or goal, nature a field of dreary repetition."

A book so unorthodox as this would never have

been admitted among the sacred writings if certain alterations and additions had not been made to bring it into line with the religious beliefs of the day. A pious commentator, therefore, of the time took the book in hand, and inserted certain passages on the fear of God and the certainty of God's judgment in order to counteract the dangerous teaching of Koheleth.

In addition to the interpolations of the pious man, another hand has sprinkled the book with various proverbs, which in many cases have no bearing upon the context. A good example of the work of this writer (who seems to have had a collection of proverbs before him to draw upon) is to be found at the end of the 9th and the beginning of the 10th chapters.

THE SONG OF SONGS.

A Marriage Idyll.

The Song of Songs is now generally held to be a single poem, the work of a single author, and not, as was formerly thought, a collection of independent poems from the hands of various authors. The piece is dramatic in form, but there is no ground for believing that it was ever intended for stage representation. In all probability it was designed to be sung or recited on special occasions—at marriages or the feasts of the richer classes, where we know that music and singing formed part of the entertainment—and the performer

would indicate to the audience, by changes in his voice and action, the different characters, and the development of the story. In the first verse the title of the piece is given as ' The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.' This expression is simply a form of the Hebrew superlative, and therefore does not mean " A song consisting of songs," but " The best or the greatest of the songs."

The theme of the Song is the triumph of true and virtuous love. The characters in the poem are (1) a maiden called " the Shulamite," a girl from the town of Shunem or Shulem in the tribe of Issachar, and near Mt. Tabor; (2) King Solomon; (3) a young farmer, from the girl's home country, to whom she is betrothed; (4) the ladies of the Court who are called " the daughters of Jerusalem."

A synopsis of the story before the action starts can be gathered from various hints in the poem itself. In the town of Shulem, lying in the hills above the plain of Jezreel, lived a family of the farming class, comprising a mother, two sons, and an only daughter. This daughter, who was " famed for her beauty " and grace, and her sweet singing, fell in love with a prosperous young farmer of the district who was the possessor of gardens and of flocks of sheep. Her brothers, however, sent her away from her home to watch the vineyards, and there her outdoor life darkened her complexion, so that she later compared herself with poetic exaggeration to the black tents of the Bedawîn. One day, when she had gone down to her walnut garden to admire the new growths of the spring, she suddenly came

upon a large party of ladies from the court who spoke to her and praised her beauty and attempted to win her for the king. Whether by force or persuasion, she was eventually brought to Jerusalem, and when the poem opens she is represented as being in the palace and longing to get free and return to her lover.

The ladies of the harîm sing the praises of Solomon and try to induce the country maid to give him her love also. Solomon himself pays his court to her, but she carries the thought of her lover ever in her bosom and is deaf to the king's compliments and promises. In her dreams, even, she sees him in the streets of the town and follows him from street to street, and her constant reply to king and courtiers alike is: "My beloved is mine, and I am his." Her lover comes at last in person to lead her away with him to Lebanon, and the great king, wearied with her resistance, lets her go unhindered. She leaves the court leaning upon the arm of her beloved, and as she draws near to her mother's home he points out to her the apple tree where long ago he had awakened her from sleep to love. Then she gives utterance to that wonderful song in praise of love, which is the "climax and moral" of the whole poem.

In Northern Syria to-day the wedding customs of the peasants throw considerable light upon this book. The following description is by Currie Martin: "On the day of the wedding, processions led by the band of young men known as the 'companions of the bridegroom' take place, and dances are also a prominent feature of the day, particularly the sword-dance, which

is sometimes danced by a man and sometimes by a woman, and is always accompanied by a song in praise of the beauties of the bridal pair. On the morning after the marriage the young husband and wife enter upon what has been called 'the best time in their life,' for during the seven days that follow they play the part of king and queen, and have their court to wait upon them in the person of the youths and maidens of the neighbouring community. The young men march with the threshing-board upon their shoulders, singing a joyful song, to the threshing-floor. There they erect a platform about six feet in height, place the board above it, and cover the latter with a carpet. Upon this are laid two gaily embroidered cushions, which form the throne for the 'king and queen.' Before a mock court, with much buffoonery and frequently coarse jesting, proof is led of the consummation of the marriage, and thereafter a grand dance is begun in honour of the wedded pair. Here, again, a song is sung descriptive of the physical beauty of the two, and their raiment and jewels. This descriptive song is technically known as a 'wasf,' parallels to which are to be found in the Song of Songs (4^{1-7} 5^{10-16} 6^{4-7} 7^{1-10}). This peculiar song is said to have more or less of a traditional and stereotyped form. Its character, therefore, accounts for the resemblance between the various passages above referred to in the Song of Songs. From this time onward the marriage festivities are in progress, and they consist largely of songs and dances, the former having both solos and choruses, and the

latter for the main part performed for the delectation of the bride and bridegroom, but occasionally joined in by these latter."

Henna.

In the Song of Songs 4^{13} the poet in his praises of the bride likens her to a garden, one of whose fruits is henna (R.V.). This shrub grows to a height of about 8–10 feet, and bears clusters of white and yellow blossoms of a powerful fragrance, and resembling in form a lilac flower. The leaves of this plant are collected, dried, and powdered in "henna mills," and from them a paste is made which is used by the Oriental as a dye for the palms of the hands, the soles of the feet, and the nails. This astringent dye stains a reddish rust colour, which cannot be removed by soap. Its use is primarily to check perspiration; but many ladies in the East decorate their hands and feet very fancifully with this stain, just as other races might employ tattoo.

Its significance in the Song of Songs is heightened by a knowledge of the wedding customs of the East, for after the guests have been entertained by song the following custom obtains: "A large quantity of henna having been prepared, and mixed into a paste, the bride takes a lump of it in her hand, and receives contributions (called 'nukoot') from her guests; each of them sticks a coin (usually of gold) in the henna which she holds upon her hand; and, when the lump is closely stuck with these coins, she scrapes it off her hand upon

the edge of a basin of water. Having collected in this manner from all her guests, some more henna is applied to her hands and feet, which are then bound with pieces of linen; and in this state they remain until the next morning, when they are found to be sufficiently dyed with its deep orange-red tint. Her guests make use of the remainder of the dye for their own hands. This night is called 'Leylet el-Hennà' or 'the Night of the Hennà.'" (Clifton, *Persia of To-day.*)

ISAIAH.

MISCELLANEOUS ORACLES, PROBABLY WRITTEN IN THE EARLY YEARS OF ISAIAH'S MINISTRY.

(Is. i. 1–iv. 6.)

The Historical Setting of Isaiah's Prophecies.

The occupations of the inhabitants of Palestine during the early days of the Monarchy were mainly pastoral and agricultural, but as the wealth of the country increased, and its corn, wine, and oil began to be taken in exchange for the manufactured products which came through the Phœnician seaports, towns grew up and a more complex society began to develop, and with it the formation of a rich upper class who, disregarding the peasant proprietors, gradually absorbed the land into their voracious grasp, and, by their cruel oppression of the poorer people, brought about a most disastrous social change.

The power of the rich grew in proportion to their wealth, and as the legislation of the State passed into their hands, they were able to lay down their own conditions and compel the peasant class to conform to them. This naturally led to extortion, the chief weapon

of which was their iniquitous system of usury. The hard law of that time allowed the exaction of 20 per cent. interest with the alternative of slavery if the payments were not forthcoming, while the rich further entrenched themselves by the wholesale bribery of the justices, who were paid to evict the poor man from his tenement without just cause.

War was another aggravation in the lot of the small landholder. Foreign invasion, in those days, meant the ruthless pillage of crops and cattle, and the wanton destruction of plantations and villages, so that the inevitable result of the wars which ravaged Palestine during the later days of the Monarchies of both Judah and Israel was the total ruin of the small farmer, who found voluntary servitude the only alternative to death by starvation.

In the days of Samuel and David the religious ardour of the leaders of the people was sufficient to fire the national enthusiasm and sustain the courage of the nation in times of difficulty and disaster. But in the degenerate days of Isaiah the priests, who should have upheld the honoured traditions of the past, were dissolute and immoral. The priest and the prophet, laments Isaiah, "have erred through strong drink . . . they are swallowed up of wine, they are gone astray through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean" (Is. $28^{7.8}$).

Since the death of Solomon, the great enemy of the Hebrews had been their Northern rival, Syria, but with

the rise of the Assyrian power Syria sank into insignificance, until she sustained the final blow in her defeat by Assyria, *circa* 803 B.C., a shock from which she never recovered. The Assyrians remained quiescent for a time after this conquest, so that Israel, freed temporarily from the ravages of the Syrians, enjoyed that brief respite under Jeroboam II., while Judah was also granted an interval of peace under the contemporary reign of Azariah, both states thus regaining some of their old glory. It was, however, a very evanescent prosperity, for with the accession of Tiglath-pileser (or Pul) to the Assyrian throne, that kingdom again resumed its aggressive policy and, to use the prophetic simile, began to look round like a lion seeking whom he might devour. Yet, with this danger menacing them, the two puny states of Judah and Israel were so foolish as to war with each other. Pekah of Israel allied himself with Rezin of Damascus against Ahaz, king of Judah, the latter being pushed to such desperate straits that he voluntarily placed himself under the suzerainty of Assyria, despite the vigorous arguments of Isaiah, who disclosed to him with flaming eyes and burning words the short-sightedness of such a policy. Ahaz, however, persisted in his course and sent the fatal invitation to Tiglath-pileser, who at once responded, with the result that Israel and Syria were both conquered, their kings slain, and their territories converted into an Assyrian province.

The price that Judah had to pay for the Assyrian assistance was a heavy one; and under the reign of

her next king, Hezekiah, a strong national party arose who were desirous of shaking off the Assyrian yoke by the aid of Egypt, an act which Isaiah strongly protested against, realizing that since Judah had placed herself under the vassalage of Pileser there was no option but to submit to the results of that policy, mistaken as it had been. To enforce his advice the prophet appeared publicly in the garb of a prisoner just as the excitement was at its height, as a sign that, if this new course of action were persisted in, it would lead to the loss of the national liberty. The stern figure of Isaiah thus parading the streets of Jerusalem served as a powerful object lesson to the people, and the proposed revolt against Assyria was temporarily checked. But on the death of Sargon, the successor of Pileser, and the accession of Sennacherib, the rising current of enthusiastic patriotism could not be stemmed, and the alliance with Egypt and Ethiopia was completed, Hezekiah, with all the rulers of the neighbouring petty states, openly rebelling against the Assyrian monarch.

In the year 701 B.C., therefore, Sennacherib invested Jerusalem with a large army. On their downward march the invaders had plundered forty-six cities, had defeated the allies and desolated Judah, yet, hopeless as the outlook appeared, Isaiah remained unmoved in his assurance that God would save Jerusalem and not allow it to fall into the hands of the heathen. This apparently impossible event became a fact, for at a time when the Holy City seemed fated to submit, the Assyrian army was stricken, perhaps with bubonic plague, and the

siege was raised. We can well imagine that this event was read by the people as a miracle from Yahweh, and that it must have increased the authority of the prophet, who seemed to have had the seal of God's approval imprinted on his words.

It was the power this incident gave to Isaiah that enabled him to exert such a beneficial influence upon Hezekiah, that king and nation, thankful for their escape, turned to the God of their fathers, restored His service in the Temple, and abolished the worst of the idolatrous practices that had become the rule of the land.

Unhappily for the Northern Kingdom, repentance came too late. They had neglected the warnings of Amos and Hosea, and so were given up to their relentless foes. That the ruin of the Southern State of Judah was delayed a century, and time gained in which the true religion could firmly establish itself so as to survive that fall, was undoubtedly due to Isaiah's work and life.

The wonderful fulfilment of his predictions in the year 701 B.C., when Jerusalem was delivered from the Assyrians, served to establish the higher teaching of his prophecy; but it also gave rise to the false confidence of the Jews in the days of the later Babylonian invasion. For so deeply had Isaiah's pronouncement that Zion was inviolable, because it was the abode of Yahweh, sunk into the minds of the people that Jeremiah suffered all the penalties of anti-patriotism because he dared to oppose a belief that had come to be regarded almost as a fundamental article of faith.

Hebrew Dress and Fashion.

In Palestine at the present day the three principal divisions of the inhabitants are clearly distinguished by their dress. The Bedawîn are conservative. They have the same kind of garments that the Hebrews wore when they also were nomads. The country folk have admitted certain changes which are the result of a settled life in villages and of contact with the fashions of the town. The Madani or townspeople have a whole wardrobe of garments, consisting of a shirt of cotton or fine linen, cotton drawers, trousers of a thicker cloth, a waistcoat, a bright striped garment called a kombaz, a girdle, a tarbush, a fur-lined cloak, shoes, and sometimes stockings.

While the Hebrews were nomads their clothing was similar to that of the modern Arabs. That is to say, their everyday garment was a long, thin shirt with belt. Above that they put on the "farawa," or sheepskin coat. Over this again they might wear the "simlah," or square cloak of wool, goat hair or camel hair.

But with the change to village life a change also took place in the form and character of their clothes. The cotton shirt was amply sufficient for the ordinary conditions of nomadic or Bedawîn life; but the settled life of the farmer and the villager demanded something more. So we have the arrival of the *coat* or *tunic* (kuttoneth). This tunic was a moderately close-fitting garment, reaching to the ankles and resembling a dressing-gown or cassock. It was worn over the cotton

or linen shirt. The entire front of the garment was cut open, but it was held together at the waist by a broad sash. Though in pictures of Jewish prisoners captured by Sennacherib the tunic is represented as having short sleeves reaching half-way to the elbows, the tunic of later days had long sleeves reaching to the wrists, or even, sometimes, to the knee.

While the tunic was the working garment of the Hebrew, he possessed a second and heavier article of clothing for wearing in bad weather and as a protection against the night cold. Our Lord distinguishes these two garments when He says, "If any man would go to law with thee, and take away thy *coat*, let him have thy *cloke* also" (Mt. 5^{40}).

The commonest form of this cloak was that of the heavy *simlâh*, the protection of the traveller at night, the outer garment of the shepherd. "It consisted of a piece of cloth about 7 feet from right to left, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet from top to bottom. A width of $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet was folded in at each side, and sewn along the top, with a slit at each top-corner through which the hand and wrist could pass. The garment thus losing about $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet on each side became a square. Usually, two pieces, each 7 feet long and 2 feet wide, were sewn together to make the block material, and the over-edged joining is seen running across the back. The finest kind, however, is made of one entire piece. Such, most likely, was Christ's garment 'without seam' (Jn. 19^{23}). The 'hairy garment' (Gen. 25^{25}) may have been a camel-hair *simlâh*. Cloaks of camel hair are common

at the present day, those made in the neighbourhood of ancient Cilicia having a rough surface like that of Scotch shooting tweed, but much firmer and heavier in the make. They are often of a coppery-brown colour, and the comparison in Gen. 25[25] would be easily suggested. They are also made of wool and of goats' hair. Ornamentation of coloured silk or red wool is frequently sewn upon the neck, front, and back. The general surface is often further relieved by its being woven in broad stripes of darker and lighter, or black and white colours. In the ordinary *simlâh* of the Syrian shepherd and farmer this is the most characteristic feature. Elijah's mantle and John the Baptist's raiment were of the square cloak pattern." [1]

Another form of this outer garment was the *me'il*, worn by the priests and the upper classes, "the full dress of ancient times." This garment was of a lighter and better quality of material than the tunic. It was a loose robe open down the front, with wide sleeves, and unconfined by a girdle. This was the "robe" of Saul—the garment from which David cut off a corner (1 Sam. 24[4]); the robe which Jonathan gave to David (1 Sam. 18[4]); the robe of the prophet Samuel when he appeared before Saul at Endor (1 Sam. 28[14]); and the "long robe" which was the delight of the scribe (Lk. 20[46]).

The *girdle*, in its common form, consisted of a long strip of cloth wound several times round the waist above the shirt and tunic, and forming with the latter

[1] G. M. Mackie, in *H.D.B.* i. 625.

a convenient bosom pocket. The girdle also held the ink-horn of the scribe—a narrow case containing the reed pens and with a small cup or box at the upper end for the ink. In the case of a person setting out on a journey, or engaging in active exercise of any kind, the tunic was drawn up between the legs and its ends tucked through the girdle in front. Thus the phrase "girding the loins" came to be used in a figurative sense for energetic action.

It is probable that in early times the Hebrews wore a *head-dress* resembling that of the modern Bedawîn. This consists of a piece of coloured cotton, linen, or silk, about a yard square, which is folded in the form of a triangle and placed over the head in such a manner as to shade the eyes and protect also the neck and shoulders. It is held in position by a thick cord of wool or a band of "twisted cotton whipped with threads of silk and gold." At a later period it was the custom of the Hebrews to wear a head-dress more after the fashion of the present-day turban. The latter is the form of head-gear indicated by Ezekiel when he says: "I bound thee with a tire of fine linen" (Ezek. 16^{10}, R.V.m.).

Sandals were worn in travelling, but not within doors. The usual form of sandal was one made of leather and attached to the feet by a thong, the "shoe-latchet" of Gen. 14^{23}.

There is no such marked difference between the dress of men and women in the East as there is with us. Hebrew women wore the linen or cotton shirt, the

tunic, the *me'il*, and the turban, just as the men did. But there must have been a distinction, for exchange of apparel between the sexes was strictly forbidden. Probably the garments of women were fuller and longer; and we know that the robes of wealthy women were of finer material and more lavishly ornamented than those of men. The distinguishing feature of women's dress, however, was the *veil*. The veil was made of white cotton or of black or coloured silk, and consisted of two parts, one thrown back over the head from above the eyes, while the other fell over the face from beneath the eyes.

An elaborate list of the contents of a fashionable lady's wardrobe is given in the third chapter of Isaiah: "In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their anklets, and the cauls, and the crescents; the pendants, and the bracelets, and the mufflers; the headtires, and the ankle chains, and the sashes, and the perfume boxes, and the amulets; the rings, and the nose jewels; the festival robes, and the mantles, and the shawls, and the satchels; the hand mirrors, and the fine linen, and the turbans, and the veils" (Is. 3^{18-23}). "Anklets of solid gold or silver," says Lane, in his *Modern Egyptians*, "are worn by some ladies. They are of course very heavy, and, knocking together as the wearer walks, make a ringing noise: hence it is said in a song 'The ringing of thine anklets has deprived me of my reason.'" Isaiah alludes to this when he says that the daughters of Sion make a "tinkling with their feet," as they mince along the

streets. The "cauls" were caps of network enclosing the hair; the "mufflers" are the characteristic Oriental veils already described. The "perfume boxes" were probably bags or bottles of fragrant nard or myrrh which the ladies of Jerusalem wore suspended from their necks. The Shulamite in the Song of Songs says, "My beloved is unto me as a bundle of myrrh, that lieth betwixt my breasts."

The taste for "purple and fine linen" was developed in Israel long before the days of Dives. In their love for brilliant colours in their dress the Hebrews were more akin to the Canaanites than to the Egyptians. While the latter inclined to white garments, the Canaanites seem early to have had a fondness for gaudy colours and luxurious costumes, and the Hebrews after the conquest were influenced in the same direction.

The business of making clothes for the household fell to the woman. Thus of the virtuous woman in the Book of Proverbs we read that, "She is not afraid of the snow for her household; for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh for herself carpets of tapestry; her clothing is fine linen and purple. Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. She maketh linen garments and selleth them; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant" (Prov. 31^{21-24}). According to Rihbany, "the Syrian husband of the good old type does not buy his wearing apparel 'ready-made' at the clothier's. His garments are made by his wife. When he sits with the elders of the community in the market-

place, or at the gate of the town where those dignitaries converse on matters of public interest, and speak parables and tell stories, his neat appearance bespeaks the diligence and loving care of his wife. 'Verily his wife is a costly jewel,' is the likely remark of such a fortunate man's admirers. How true also to the nobler instincts of the East are these words in this poetical description of the virtuous woman: 'Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.'" [1]

Clothes were frequently presented in token of affection or as a mark of honour. On special occasions —at a feast for example—the host sometimes provided robes for his guests. To be given the "best robe" was a signal mark of honour. The presentation of a robe was in some cases equivalent to promotion or installation. "And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh took off his signet ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen" (Gen. $41^{41ff.}$). On the other hand, taking away the robe was equivalent to dismissal.

In Arabia there was a custom that when a man died his heir established his right to marry the widow by the act of throwing his garment over her. This illustrates the words of Ruth (3^{9}) when she says to Boaz, "Spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman."

[1] Rihbany, *The Syrian Christ*, p. 255.

THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD.

(Is. v. 1–30.)

Hebrew Weights and Measures.

1. *Measures of Length.*

The great principle which underlies all systems of weights and measures in all countries is the establishment of fixed standards by which all lengths, capacities, and weights shall be compared, so that it may be possible to find out how often an unknown quantity contains some known quantity of the same kind. An abstract quantity is therefore decided upon, and this abstract quantity provides the unit of the standard. Thus the British unit of length is the yard, and the standard yard is the distance, at a temperature of 62 degrees Fahr., between two plugs of gold sunk in a bar of platinum. This bar is kept in London, though accurate copies are in other cities. The temperature is important because metals expand with heat and contract with cold, so that the distance between two metal points would vary on hot and cold days and the standard be nullified. Again, the British unit of weight is the pound troy, which is determined by the weight of a cubic inch of distilled water; while the unit of capacity is the space occupied by ten pounds avoirdupois of distilled water when the temperature is 62 degrees Fahr., and the barometer stands at 30 inches.

In view of the above facts the difficulty of estimating accurately an ancient and comparatively crude system

of weights and measures, such as that used by the Hebrews, will be appreciated. Thus mankind's earliest measures of length were those of Nature's own providing—the finger, the hand, and so forth—and the custom was widespread of reckoning as the standard of measurement the length of the forearm from the tip of the elbow to the tip of the middle finger, the "cubit of a man" (Deut. 3^{11}). This was probably the unit employed in the planning of Solomon's Temple, which was laid out on the basis of the "first measure" (2 Chron. 3^{3}). In Egypt there were two cubits, the "ordinary" and the "royal," the object of the latter being to give the government an advantage in taxation; and it would appear that the Hebrews had a similar system. The exact length of these cubits is not known, calculations based on the modern measurement of ruins only giving us approximate figures. An attempt has been made to arrive at a more accurate result by measuring grains of barley, Rabbinical tradition stating that 144 barley corns laid side by side equalled 1 cubit, and it is to be noted that the measurement of 17·7 inches thus arrived at is the length of the Egyptian ordinary cubit.

Just as we have the various designations for fractions and multiples of the yard (inch, foot, furlong, mile, etc.), so the Hebrews had names for the fractions and multiples of the cubit. There was the *finger's breadth* or digit (Jer. 52^{21}); the *hand's breadth* (1 Kings 7^{26}, Ezek. 40^{5} etc.); the *span* (Exod. 28^{16} 39^{9} etc.) and the *gomed*, a special measure whose length is not known.

It was the length of Ehud's sword (Judg. 3^{16}), and is not mentioned elsewhere. All these, save the gomed, were fractions of the cubit. The only multiple mentioned in the O.T. is the *reed* (Ezek. 40^{5}). It measured 6 cubits. The "Sabbath day's journey" (Acts 1^{12}) was usually computed at 2000 cubits. This was the distance by which the Ark preceded the host of the Israelites, and it was consequently presumed that this distance might be covered on the Sabbath, since the host must be allowed to attend worship at the Ark. The distance was doubled by a legal fiction: on the eve of the Sabbath, food was placed at a spot 2000 cubits on, and this new place thus became the traveller's place within the meaning of the prescription of Exod. 16^{29}; there were also other means of increasing the distance. The Mount of Olives was distant a Sabbath day's journey from Jerusalem, and the same distance is given by Josephus as 5 stadia, thus confirming the 2000 cubits computation. There seem to have been no standard measures for small areas. In land computation nearly all ancient countries based their calculations on the amount that a yoke of oxen could plough in a day, or the amount of seed required to sow an acre. Thus the sowing of a homer of barley was assessed at the price of 50 shekels of silver (Lev. 27^{16}).

2. *Measures of Capacity.*

The Hebrew measures of capacity are even less exactly known than the measures of length, for liquid

and dry measures were often differentiated, and, like our British custom, certain measures seem to have been more or less confined to certain commodities. The standard was apparently the *seah*, which was about 24 pints. It was used for both dry and liquid measure. Taking, then, the seah as the unit we arrive approximately at the following table:

The *log*=$\frac{1}{24}$ of a seah=1 pint, used as a measure for oil (Lev. 14^{10}).
The *hab*=$\frac{1}{6}$ of a seah=4 pints, used for both solids and liquids.
The *hin*=$\frac{1}{2}$ of a seah=12 pints, used for liquids.

There appears also to have been a "sacred hin," which measured only $\frac{3}{4}$ of the ordinary hin; and a "large hin," which measured two "sacred" hins.

The *ephah*=3 seahs or 72 pints dry measure.
The *bath*=3 seahs or 72 pints liquid measure.

Confusion is introduced by the custom of the Hebrews of treating these two measures as partial standards, both being divided into tenths and into sixths. The name of the tenth of an "ephah" was the *omer*, while the sixth of a "bath" was the "hin" The names of the $\frac{1}{10}$ "bath" and $\frac{1}{6}$ "ephah" are not known.

The *cor* or *homer*=30 seahs or 720 pints.

The "cor" appears to have been usually the liquid measure and the "homer" usually the measure for solids. (Cf. Ezek. $45^{11.14}$, Hos. 3^{2}, Lk. 16^{7}.)

3. *Measures of Weight.*

Owing to the actual discovery in Palestine of hundreds of ancient weights inscribed with their value, the estimation of the Hebrew system is known with more accuracy than that of the measures of length and capacity. The weights used by the Hebrews were mostly of some hard polished stone and were of three denominations—the *shekel*, the *mina*, and the *talent*. The system seems to have been borrowed from Babylonia, and is curiously free from Egyptian influence. As in the case of the measures of length, there appear to have been two standards of weight—the royal, for taxation purposes, and the common. It will be recalled that Absalom's hair weighed 200 shekels of the "king's weight" (2 Sam. 14^{26}). It must be noted, too, that as weights were the basis of money transactions they varied with the purchasing power of the currency. Thus in the fourth century B.C., owing to a fall in the price of gold, the weight of the standard silver shekel fell very considerably, though it is thought that the "shekel of the sanctuary" was kept inviolate. The following table will give a rough guide:

1 *shekel* = nearly $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce.
1 *mina* = 50 shekels = about $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb.
1 *talent* = 3000 shekels = 96 lb.

In the N.T. times this system was adjusted to the Roman official system and the shekel was slightly reduced.

The following article bears upon this section:

Dove's Dung, p. 44.

DISCOURSES WRITTEN IN THE CRISIS OF THE SYRO-EPHRAIMITIC INVASION.

(Is. vi.–ix.)

NOTE.

Is. 6^2 "*Above him stood the seraphim.*"—The Seraphim (probably "fiery beings") are mentioned nowhere else in Scripture as angelic beings. The basis of the symbol is obscure. The serpents with which the Israelites were plagued in the desert are called seraphim, and the brazen Saraph made by Moses (Num. 21^9) must have been a conspicuous object in the Temple at the time of Isaiah's call (2 Kings 18^4). Analogies are found in the winged figures outside Egyptian and Assyrian temples and palaces. (Skinner.)

ORACLES AGAINST ASSYRIA.

(Is. x.)

NOTES.

Is. 10^9 "*Is not Calno as Carchemish?*"—Carchemish was the centre of the Hittite confederacy and was captured by Sargon of Assyria 717 B.C. Calno was captured by Tiglath-pileser IV. 738 B.C.

"*Is not Hamath as Arpad?*"—Both these cities were taken by Assyria 738–740 B.C.

THE PROPHECIES OF RESTORATION AND THE FALL OF BABYLON.

(Is. xi. 1–xiv. 23.)

MEDIA.

The first appearance of the Medes in history occurs definitely in the ninth century B.C., when they began to

occupy the mountainous territory south and south-east of the Caspian Sea, from which they gradually expanded until they touched the borders of Elam in the seventh century, making Ecbatana their capital (Ezra 6^2).

In the year 836 B.C. the Assyrian monarch, Shalmaneser II., made an expedition against them which is recorded in a surviving inscription. Thereafter the Assyrian annals make frequent mention of the Medes, referring to them as "those dangerous foes." However, the Assyrians succeeded in subduing them at the time of Tiglath-pileser III. and Sargon, the latter deporting some of them in 721 B.C. as captives to Samaria (2 Kings 17^6 18^{11}). Sargon tells us that at this time Media was divided into districts, each of which was governed by its own chief, with the title of "king."

Later the separate petty kingdoms of Media were united under Phraortes, and under his rule the new Empire embraced Persia, Elam, and Susa, and up to the borders of Ashkuza. Phraortes' son, Cyaxares, made still further conquests. Allying himself with the rising Chaldean power, he destroyed the Assyrian Empire, and sacked Nineveh (607 B.C.), by which victory the Median Empire was greatly extended, stretching as far as the Halys and including the country north of the Tigris.

But it did not last long. Sooner or later Media and Persia were sure to come to blows. The issue was decided in favour of Persia, by the genius of Cyrus. But that it was not a military victory appears from the fact that only the Median sovereignty was set aside,

the nobles being allowed to retain their position and something of their old power. It is even doubtful if Cyrus was a Persian or a Mede. If he was a Mede, the Median Empire was brought to an end rather by internal revolution than by Persian conquest, though certainly the Persians had a hand in it. Still the Median Empire did come to an end. Henceforth Cyrus is designated king of the Persians, and the seat of government is removed from Ecbatana to Susa. From this time the history of the Medes is merged in that of the Persians.

ORACLES AGAINST ASSYRIA, PHILISTIA, MOAB, AND DAMASCUS.

(Is. xiv. 24–xvii. 11.)

Damascus.

Damascus is one of the most remarkable cities in the world, in one respect the most remarkable of all. For it has preserved a continuous existence right down from the beginnings of history to the present day. Other cities may have been built before it, and may have attained a greater degree of prosperity for a time, but they all perished, one after another, while Damascus remained. It has passed through many vicissitudes. It has been attacked, as Sir Frederick Treves says, by every known power in the ancient world, from the cultured Romans and the Franks to the savage hordes of Mongols under Timur. It has been raided by the Egyptians and the Assyrians, by the Arabs and the

Armenians, by the Persians, the Greeks, and the Turks, while even the Crusaders at one period made a half-hearted assault upon it, which came to nothing. It has had many masters. But throughout all these experiences it has still remained the same city of Damascus, living its own life, and preserving its apparently indestructible personality.

Twice the supremacy of the city has been challenged, first by Antioch, and then by Baghdad. But Antioch has fallen into decay, and Baghdad is forgotten. The empires which conquered Damascus have passed away, their capitals have been laid in the dust, but Damascus still blooms "like a tree planted by the rivers of water." She is famed for her sweetmeats, her perfumes, and her carpets. She has given her name to a rose, to a plum, to the richest of metal-work and the richest of silks. "She is the typical city, pure and simple, of the Orient; the open port on the edge of the desert, the trading-booth at the foot of the mountains, the pavilion in the heart of the blossoming bower—the wonderful child of a little river and an immemorial Spirit of Place."

The city owes its existence to the fact that in the river Abana, the modern Barada, it possesses an inexhaustible treasure and one which is to be found nowhere else. The Abana has created the city of Damascus out of the desert sand. From its source in Anti-Lebanon it descends to the plain of the Ghuta, on which Damascus lies, and there spreads out into seven streams, converting the land into a green oasis, from the midst of which rise the domes and minarets of the city itself, "The Pearl

set in Emeralds," as Oriental imagination describes it. Pearl grey is indeed the colour of the city, and the gardens and orchards which surround it on all sides are its setting of emeralds. But there are an infinite number of tints that go to make the rich green of this setting. "The sombre hue of the olive, and the deep green of the walnut, are relieved by the lighter shade of the apricot, the silvery sheen of the poplar, and the russet tinge of the pomegranate; while lofty cone-like cypresses appear at intervals, and a few palms raise up their graceful heads. In early spring the blossoms of the fruit trees give another charm to the scene—lying like foam upon that verdant sea."

The Abana has not brought about this miracle of beauty unaided. The Pharpar also has its smaller share in turning the desert into a smiling and fertile plain. This stream, whose modern name is the Nahr el Awaj, takes its rise high up on the slopes of Hermon and, reaching the plain, approaches only within 7 miles of Damascus, while the Abana flows directly through the town.

Damascus is the largest city and the real metropolis of Syria, with a population of fully 200,000. It is also, in a very true sense, the capital of the desert. The great Syrian desert reaches up to touch its green walls, "the breath of it is blown in on every wind, and the spirit of it comes through the eastern gates with every camel driver." Its crowded streets and bazaars exhibit an extraordinary variety and vivacity. Merchants in their many-coloured robes, picturesquely ragged beggars,

Moslem pilgrims, stalwart Turks, pale-faced townsmen, sallow Jews "with dirty love-locks and downcast eyes," graceful, heavily veiled Mohammedan women, bearded Greek priests in long black robes and high stove-pipe hats, bronzed Algerians, and dark-skinned Sudanese —all these figures pass before the eyes in an ever-changing kaleidoscope of colour, and over all is the babel of their cries, their laughter, and their threats.

The secret of Damascus' prosperity throughout the centuries was its central position on the trade routes of the ancient world. "It was planted upon the highway that reached from Nineveh and Babylon on the east to that great sea in the west whose waters spread beyond the limits of the known world. It stood in the way, too, of that road that came up from the south, from the lands of ancient Egypt and the wastes of Arabia, to press northwards in search of new worlds and fresh enterprise. Through the streets of Damascus, through the street which is called Straight, came, with jingling bells and brilliant burdens, the camel caravans from the Tigris and the Euphrates and the lands beyond. Up to Damascus tramped rugged seamen from the coast of Phœnicia, men whose boats lay rocking in the harbours of Tyre and Sidon, bringing with them skins and strange metals and tales of lands and of people stranger still. It was in Damascus that the men of the sea, who had looked upon the white cliffs of England, bartered, by signs and gestures, with the men of the desert who had passed through the land of Assyria and could tell of the wide, mysterious world

that stretched beyond the rivers towards the rising sun. Thus Damascus stood at the spot where the two great highways met along which passed the commerce and the armies of the ancient world." [1]

In Biblical times.—It was to Hobah, "which is on the left hand (or north) of Damascus" (Gen. 14[15]), that Abram pursued the kings of the East. This reference indicates that Damascus was a well-known place even as far back as 2000 B.C. In the time of David (2 Sam. 8[5. 6]), Damascus came to the assistance of its hard-pressed neighbours of Zobah, and as a reprisal for the help given to Hadadezer, king of Zobah, David stormed the city, and its inhabitants were compelled to recognize his authority. In Solomon's day, however, a former general of Hadadezer, Rezon by name, made himself king at Damascus and proved a troublesome neighbour to Israel (1 Kings 11[23. 24]). The next reference to Damascus is during the reign of Asa. When threatened by the king of Israel, Asa applied for help to Benhadad, king of Syria, whose royal city was Damascus. The latter promptly invaded Israel and sacked its border cities (1 Kings 15[17ff.]). Hostilities between Syria and Israel continued down to the time of Ahab. At the battle of Aphek, Benhadad's army was overthrown and he himself was taken captive, but the king of Israel foolishly released him and thus brought upon himself the prophet's denunciation (1 Kings 20[42]). In the reign of Jehoram we have the fascinating story of the meeting of Naaman,

[1] Sir Frederick Treves, *The Land that is Desolate.*

the Syrian general, with the prophet Elisha, his enthusiastic praise of his own native rivers, the Abana and the Pharpar, and the account of the healing of his leprosy (2 Kings 5). At a later date we find Damascus under Rezon allied with Israel against Judah and besieging Jerusalem. Ahaz in desperation turned to Assyria for help. Tiglath-pileser marched with an army to his assistance, and very quickly reduced Damascus to subjection. Damascus never regained its independence. From the Assyrians it passed into the hands of the Babylonians, then into those of the Persians, and of Alexander the Great; and so on by a succession of rulers, down to modern days. The prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled, "the kingdom shall cease from Damascus."

NOTE.

Is. 17^{10} "*thou plantest pleasant plants.*"—The supposed reference is to the Adonis-gardens mentioned by Greek writers. They were pots of quickly withering flowers which the ancients used to set at their doors or in the courts of temples. There are a number of scattered proofs, slight but very interesting, that the deity known to the Greeks as Adonis, and to the Hebrews as Tammuz (Ezek. 8^{14}), actually bore the name here rendered "pleasant" (Na'aman). It has been suggested, *e.g.*, that the anemone, the flower sacred to Adonis, derives its name from this title of the god; and in Arabic the red anemone is called by a name which is explained to mean "wounds of Adonis." Adonis being a Syrian deity, his worship in Israel was a necessary consequence of the alliance with Damascus, and was practised chiefly by women (Ezek. 8^{14}). (Skinner.)

ORACLES AGAINST ASSYRIA AND EGYPT.

(Is. xvii. 12–xx. 6.)

The Olive Tree.

The olive tree is a very characteristic feature in an Oriental landscape, and it was so common in Palestine that the country is repeatedly called a "land of corn, wine, and oil." In appearance the tree is a grey-green with a gnarled trunk, looking from a distance not unlike a willow. In the spring-time, when the flowers are out, the tree is very beautiful as it sheds its myriad blooms with the slightest breath of wind (Job 15^{33}). The fruit ripens in the autumn, and is gathered in October about the time of the Feast of Booths.

A crier proclaims the day settled by the village elders when the olive harvest is to commence, and the people who own trees are then permitted to collect the berries. This is done in two ways—by beating the tree with rods (Deut. 24^{20}), and by shaking the branches (Is. 17^{6} 24^{13}). As the tree is only about 20 feet high, it is easily climbed for both these processes. In this manner berries yielding 15 to 20 gallons of oil may be gathered from a single tree. This productiveness is one of the reasons for the frequent use of the olive as the symbol of blessing (Ps. 52^{8}, Jer. 11^{16}, Hos. 14^{6} etc.).

The berries are used in a number of ways. Some are at once pickled in salt water and preserved, to be

eaten whole, but the bulk are carried to the olive presses where the oil is extracted. Two standard forms of press are described by Thomson, the " m'aserah," and the " mutruf."

The former is worked by hand, and is used only for the olives which fall first in autumn, before the rains of winter raise the brooks which drive the mutruf. The olives for the m'aserah are ground to a pulp in circular stone basins by rolling a large stone wheel over them. The mass is then put into small baskets of straw-work, which are placed one upon another, between two upright posts, and pressed by a screw which moves in the beam or entablature from above, like the screw in the standing-press of a bookbinder, or else by a beam-lever. After this first pressing, the pulp is taken out of the baskets, put into large copper pans, and, after being sprinkled with water, is heated over a fire, and again pressed as before. This finishes the process, and the oil is put away in jars to use, or in cisterns, to be kept for future market.

The mutruf is driven like an ordinary mill, except that the apparatus for beating up the olives is an upright cylinder, with iron cross-bars at the lower end. This cylinder turns rapidly in a hollow tube of stone-work, into which the olives are thrown from above, and beaten to a pulp by the revolving cross-bars. The interior of the tube is kept hot, so that the mass is taken out below sufficiently heated to cause the oil to run freely. The same baskets are used as in the m'aserah, but the press is a beam-lever, with heavy

weights at the end. This process is repeated a second time, as in the m'aserah, and then the refuse is thrown away. Occasionally the olives are trodden, like grapes, with the feet.

The produce thus collected is of enormous importance to the Oriental. It is used as oil for lamps, it supplies the place of butter; every dish is cooked with it, and the soap of the country is made exclusively from it. It was used as a medicine (Lk. 10^{34}), as a cosmetic (Mt. 6^{17} etc.), as an item of sacrifice, and for the anointing of priests, kings, and prophets. The wood, which is of a rich amber colour and finely grained, is still largely used in cabinet work, as it was in the days of Solomon (1 Kings $6^{23, 31, 33}$).

A SERIES OF ORACLES.

(Is. xxi. 1–xxii. 25.)

NOTE.

Is. 22^{22} "*the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder.*" —The primitive wooden key, still used in Palestine, was of considerable size and weight, and was literally carried on the shoulder. (Cheyne.)

AN ORACLE AGAINST TYRE.

(Is. xxiii.)

Phœnicia.

Phœnicia was the narrow strip of land lying between the Lebanon range and the Mediterranean Sea. It ex-

tended in general from the Orontes River in the north to Mount Carmel in the south, a stretch of about 200 miles, and consisted mostly of a series of narrow plains varying in width from 1 to 10 miles. The name of the country is derived from a Greek word, *phœnix*, meaning " blood red," and was given either on account of the colour of the soil, or in allusion to the purple dye of the murex, which the Phœnicians carried to other countries. By their language, which differed only dialectically from that of the Hebrews, and by their religion, the Phœnicians clearly belonged to the Semitic race. Their original home is believed to have been Northern Arabia, and they were probably part of that great movement of the tribes which brought the Hyksos to Egypt.

Shut in within narrow limits by the mountain chain on the west, and having a coast-line which provided them with a number of natural harbours, the Phœnicians were early turned in the direction of the sea and rapidly became the chief naval power and the merchantmen of the old world. In early times their ships braved the dangers of the Ægean and passed on into the Euxine Sea, where they carried on a profitable trade with the peoples of the coast lands. Later adventurers made their way round the Peloponnesus to Sicily and the southern shores of Italy, and even up the Tyrrhenian Sea to the Gulf of Lyons. But it was not only by sea that the Phœnicians brought their merchandise to foreign lands. They pushed their trade also by the land routes, going to Arabia for precious stones, incense

and myrrh, and gold; to the shores of the Baltic Sea for amber; to India for pearls, spices, ivory, and ebony; to Egypt for grain; to the mines of Cornwall in quest of tin, which was brought overland to their colony at Tarshish, "centuries before the Tyrian ships ventured to pass the Pillars of Hercules."

The chief cities of Phœnicia, each of which seems to have had its own king and government, were Arvad (modern Ruwad), 70 miles north of Beyrout, which is described in Ezek. $27^{8.\ 11}$ as furnishing rowers for the ships of Tyre and warriors for its defence; Gebal (modern Jebeil), which provided masons and builders for Solomon (1 Kings 5^{18}); Berytus (Beyrout); Acco in the south, known since Crusading times as Acre; Sidon, half-way between Berytus and Tyre, whose early importance gave the name of Sidonians to the Phœnicians; and, lastly, Tyre, the "daughter of Sidon," built upon an island a little distance from the shore and lying about midway between Acco and Sidon.

Of these Phœnician cities, Tyre and Sidon are the most important for Biblical history. Although the name of Tyre is generally put first—"Tyre and Sidon"—Sidon was in reality the most ancient of the Phœnician settlements. It was situated on a small promontory jutting out into the sea, and further protection was given to its harbour by a number of small islands lying off the shore. Sidonian art was famed throughout the ancient world. In Homer mention is made of a silver cup, "skilfully wrought by the ingenious Sidonians," which Achilles offered as a prize to be contended for at the

funeral games of Patroclus, and the embroidered robes, the work of the Sidonian women, are extolled by the same poet. The famous purple dye which came to be known later as Tyrian purple was first used by the Sidonians. This dye was obtained from two species of shell-fish, the "Murex" and the "Buccinum." According to W. B. Fleming, "the colouring matter is found in a sack or vein, which begins at the head of the animal and follows the line of the body. The matter is a liquid of creamy consistency, and while in the sack is of yellowish-white colour. When extracted and exposed to the light it becomes first green, then purple.

"Pliny has left us a detailed account of the process of manufacturing the dye. Fish traps, baited with mussels or frogs, were let down by ropes into the sea. When the 'Murex' was caught the sack was removed while the animal was yet alive, or after it had been killed with a blow; slow death injured the colour. The 'Buccinum' being smaller, the sack was not extracted, but the body crushed with the shell. After a maceration three days in brine, the pulp was placed in a vessel of lead and caused to simmer. The animal matter was removed by repeated skimmings, and at the end of ten days the liquor became clear. It was then boiled until the desired strength was attained. Various colour effects were secured by mixing dyes, and by exposure to sunlight at different stages of the process. It is probable that there were secrets in the art that were carefully guarded."

Up to the time of the Conquest Sidon was still the

first city of Phœnicia. But in the days of David and Solomon the leadership of the Phœnician cities appears to have passed to Tyre. Sidon suffered much at the hands of the Assyrians—a tragic period in its history, culminating in the onslaught of Esarhaddon in 676 B.C., when the city was sacked, its king slain with most of the inhabitants, and the remainder deported to Assyria. Esarhaddon built a new city, which he called by his own name, Ir' Esarhaddon, "the city of Esarhaddon." A period of rest and recovery for Phœnicia followed the decline of Assyria, but eventually a revolt against the harsh rule of Babylonia brought swift vengeance upon the city. Sidon, devastated by plague, was quickly forced into submission. Tyre, on the other hand, endured a long siege, but was finally taken by Nebuchadrezzar and destroyed (cf. Ezek. 26$^{7ff.}$), and Sidon once more occupied the first place in Phœnicia. During the Persian period, in 531 B.C., Sidon headed a revolt and was burned to the ground by Artaxerxes Ochus, more than 40,000 of its inhabitants perishing in the flames. The last chapter in the history of Phœnicia's maritime supremacy was reached with the advent of Alexander the Great. But while Phœnicia lost its predominance in the trade of the Mediterranean, Sidon still continued to figure as an important centre of trade. It became subject to Rome in 64 B.C., but was granted the rights of a free city by the Romans.

There have been many famous descriptions of the island-fortress of Tyre, but none more famous than that

which Ezekiel has given in his 27th chapter. Other writers speak in the same glowing terms of the beauty of its buildings, its thronged waterways, and its formidable defences. The Egyptian poet, Nonnus, writing about the end of the fourth century, describes how the god Dionysus, passing through the land of Phœnicia, was arrested by the beauty of Tyre. Ezekiel represents Tyre under the figure of a splendid ship moored in the midst of the sea. To Nonnus the city is like a maiden, floating in the waters, her feet touching the shore, her body in the embrace of her spouse Neptune. Lofty trees bend their branches above the water, mingling their music with that of the waves. "Sweet airs from Lebanon blow across the Tyrian sands and over the cultivated fields that skirt the shore, bringing rich harvests to the farmer and a happy voyage to the merchant."

It was in the days of Hiram the Second, a contemporary of David, that Tyre rose to the height of its fame. While he was busy over the adornment of his own city, Hiram co-operated at the same time in the building of David's palace at Jerusalem, sending cedars and skilled workmen from Phœnicia to him. In the reign of Solomon, Tyrian artists assisted in the construction of the Temple, and the navies of the two countries made joint voyages to the home of all riches, Ophir (which is most probably located in south-east Arabia) bringing back spices, precious stones, almug-trees (sandal wood), and gold. "As a seal to their long friendship," says A. Keary, "Hiram gave his daughter

in marriage to Solomon, and Solomon ceded to him a portion of Galilee lying on the borders of Tyre, which Hiram coveted because of its fruitfulness in corn. The district was still called the coasts (or boundaries) of Tyre and Sidon when our Lord visited it and healed the daughter of the Canaanitish woman who sought Him there. Hiram's daughter was one of the strange women who had such a fatal influence over Solomon, and turned away his heart from the God of Israel in his old age. For her sake he introduced the worship of Ashtoreth, the Phœnician moon-goddess, the 'abomination of the Sidonians,' into the Holy City itself; and for her use and that of his other Canaanitish wives he erected three altars—to Ashtoreth, to Molech, and to Chemosh (another name for Baal)—on the three heights of Olivet that overlooked the gardens of the cedar palace, which caused a portion of the hill of olive gardens to be called 'the Mount of Offence' down to the times when our Lord frequented it."

While it has not been proved that the Phœnicians were the first to invent the alphabet, it is at least admitted that they vastly improved the system which they obtained, and bequeathed it to the civilized world.

PROPHECIES OF THE DAY OF JUDGMENT AND ORACLES CONCERNING JERUSALEM.

(Is. xxiv. 1–xxix. 24.)

Is. 28[27] "*For the fitches are not threshed with a sharp threshing instrument, neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin; but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod.*"—Three methods of threshing are alluded to: (*a*) beating with a rod or flail (cf. Judg. 6[11], Ruth 2[17]); (*b*) treading with the feet of cattle (Deut. 25[4], Mic. 4[13]); (*c*) drawing a heavy wooden sledge, with sharp stones or iron spikes fixed in its under surface, or a waggon with a great number of wheels, over the grain.

ORACLES DEALING WITH THE EGYPTIAN ALLIANCE AND WITH ASSYRIA.

(Is. xxx.–xxxi.)

Egyptian History during the Rise and Fall of the Kingdom of Judah.

"While David was consolidating his kingdom in Palestine, the 21st (Tanite) dynasty was drawing to a close. Following the unillustrious reign of Binnaches (*c.* 996–987 B.C.) there came that of Pasebkhanut II. (*c.* 987–944 B.C.), with whose death the dynasty expired. But though these Tanite Pharaohs waged no foreign wars, and were unambitious of martial fame, Zoan under their auspices grew to be very important and influential. Its glory now eclipsed that of Thebes, which was suffering from the misgovernment of its

priest-kings; and although it could never actually rival that hoary and venerable metropolis, Tanis blazed forth as the most magnificent city in the Delta. The swamps surrounding it were drained, cultivated, and made to yield enormous crops. There was a vast export trade in fish, corn, linen, woollen goods, ornaments of glass, silver, gold, and copper. Her fleets engaged in commerce over the Mediterranean. Her harbour was capacious and secure. Her canals were carefully attended to and kept deep by dredging. Zoan was the first port of arrival for all vessels visiting Egypt, and the first emporium of trade for all caravans coming into the Delta from Canaan by the overland route. Little wonder that Tanis continued her fame from the time of Rameses II., who had so beautified the spot, and that in the days of David and Solomon she was regarded as a city of royal eminence and dignity."[1] It was with this Pasebkhanut II. that Solomon made an alliance, and it was his daughter that Solomon married and brought into the city of David.

We have now passed the great dynasties and the period of Egypt's highest grandeur. The two rival dynasties, which are reckoned together as the twenty-first, ended in weakness. Sheshenk, a man of mixed Libyan and Egyptian descent, taking advantage of this weakness, seized the double throne and became the founder of a new dynasty—the 22nd—under the name of Sheshenk or Shishak I. He removed the seat

[1] G. A. Frank Knight, *Nile and Jordan*, p. 269.

of government to a new capital, Bubastis (now Tell Basta in the Delta).

Very soon Sheshenk I. had to turn his attention to Canaan. Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, having incurred the displeasure of Solomon, "fled into Egypt unto Shishak, king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon" (1 Kings 11^{40}). After the death of Solomon and the disruption of the kingdom Sheshenk invaded Judah and came to Jerusalem (2 Chron. 12^{2-4}). Rehoboam submitted, and Sheshenk returned to Egypt with much treasure, including "all the shields of gold which Solomon had made" (1 Kings 14^{26}). On his return he had the story of his expedition carved on a pylon of the great temple at Karnak. "He is depicted killing a crowd of Semitic captives. The chiefs of 156 vanquished towns and districts in Canaan have ropes round their necks, and each one carries on a shield the name of the city he represents. These localities are very familiar. They comprise Gaza, Ekron, Gibeon, Bethhoron, Ajalon, Socoh, Shunem, Taanach, Megiddo, Rehob, Kedemoth, Mahanaim, Rabbath, Jordan, Edom, and other places, showing that the Pharaoh claimed to have overrun not only Judah, but many districts in northern Israel, and even across the Jordan." [1]

With the booty obtained in this war Sheshenk had the wherewithal to carry out extensive building operations, but his buildings are of no great account. He was succeeded by his son Osorkon I. This Osorkon

[1] Knight, p. 280.

has been identified with Zerah the Ethiopian, who came against Asa, king of Judah, "with an army of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots" (2 Chron. 14[9]); but the identification is doubtful.

Osorkon I. was succeeded by his son Thekeleth, who, again, was succeeded by his son Osorkon II. Osorkon II. completed the rebuilding of the great temple at Bubastis, dedicated to the goddess Bast, a building which profoundly impressed the Greek historian Herodotus when he visited it four hundred years later. The rest of the kings of this dynasty scarcely deserve notice. Egypt was still nominally suzerain over the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, but the kings of the two States do not seem to have in any way asserted their rights.

It was, however, about this time that the prophets of Israel and Judah began to warn their kings and people against forming an alliance with Egypt. This was due not so much to the power of Egypt, although the memory of her past greatness was still alive in Palestine, as to the fact that the power of Assyria was beginning to threaten these Syrian nations, and the prophets foresaw the probability of the kings of Judah and Israel finding it necessary, sooner or later, for their own safety to form an alliance with either Assyria or Egypt. They dreaded the alliance with Egypt, not only because she was the weaker of the two powers, but because an alliance with her would have a disastrous influence upon morals and religion.

We may take Hosea as an example. Again and again "Hosea renewed his protest. Egypt, he reminded

them, was the land from which God had rescued them, and to which there ought to be no returning in the way of seeking alliances. 'When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt: by a prophet the Lord brought Israel up out of Egypt: I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt: she shall sing as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.' So instead of help from these great Powers, Hosea promised captivity for his nation in Assyria or in Egypt: 'They shall not dwell in the Lord's land, but Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and they shall eat unclean food in Assyria: the Lord will remember their iniquity, and visit their sin, they shall return to Egypt: their princes shall fall by the sword for the rage of their tongue, this shall be their derision in the land of Egypt: though he (Israel) be fruitful among the reed-grasses, an east wind shall come, the breath of the Lord coming up from the wilderness, and his spring shall become dry: for lo, they are gone away from destruction, yet Egypt shall gather them up; Memphis shall bury them.' He selected the city of Memphis as typical of the whole Delta, not only because of its being the ancient capital, but because the Pyramids and the many tombs near it suggested the grave of Israel in a foreign land. Yet later, Hosea saw that the grave of Israel was seemingly not to be Egypt but Assyria. He therefore adds, 'He shall not return into the land of Egypt, but the Assyrian shall be his king, because they refused to return.' Nevertheless, whether it was to be Egypt or Assyria that was to be the appointed land of exile and

punishment for Israel, Hosea's message to his people was that Jehovah's love would not be utterly removed from them: it would rescue them from either locality: 'They shall come trembling as a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria, and I will make them to dwell in their houses, saith the Lord.'" [1]

Meantime the sovereignty over Egypt fell into the hands of the Nubians. Piankhi, king of Nubia, conquered the country in the 23rd dynasty, and the Nubians, or Ethiopians, retained their hold over it until the end of the 25th dynasty. Piankhi was succeeded by his brother Shabaka, who is sometimes identified with that So, king of Egypt, to whom Hoshea, the last king of Israel "had sent messengers" (2 Kings 17^4). Whether So was Shabaka or not, the Pharaoh to whom Hoshea appealed did nothing, and Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, besieged Samaria. Before it fell, Shalmaneser was murdered, and he was succeeded by Sargon II., who took Samaria and destroyed it, carrying the Israelites captive.

To the prophets of Judah it was now very clear that Assyria was the enemy. Isaiah had no more desire than Hosea to fall back upon Egypt, but he taught his fellow-countrymen to stand firm and defy the Assyrian invader, and yet he knew that as the ten tribes had been carried captive Judah also would be carried away because of her sins as a nation. Meantime the Egyptian party in Jerusalem had become active. Shabaka arranged a revolt on the part of the Philistines, in which

[1] Knight, p. 293.

Judah was implicated. But the rising was promptly quelled by the Tartan, or commander, of the Assyrian army.

Sargon's son, Sennacherib, now reigned in Assyria, and Shabaka had been succeeded by his son Shabataka. Again the Assyrian and Egyptian forces came into conflict. A battle was fought at Eltekeh, and the Egyptians were defeated. Tirhakah, king in Napata, seized the opportunity of wresting the sovereignty of Egypt from Shabataka, and had himself crowned king both at Thebes and at Tanis. Tirhakah was a man of more force of character than the Egyptian king, and Hezekiah opened negotiations with him. Isaiah protested, but in vain. Sennacherib advanced on Jerusalem. But, turning to meet Tirhakah, his army was practically annihilated by pestilence, and Sennacherib returned home, only to be murdered by his son, Esarhaddon. After some skirmishing with Tirhakah Esarhaddon completely defeated the Egyptians. He captured and sacked the city of Memphis and made Egypt a satrapy of Assyria. After Esarhaddon's return home Tirhakah recaptured Memphis, but only to be in turn defeated by Ashurbanipal, Esarhaddon's son and successor. Memphis was retaken; "the 'hundred-gated' city, the world-renowned metropolis of Egyptian art, the once impregnable capital from which victorious legions had marched forth to spread their terror among the surrounding nations, was stormed and pillaged by a ruthless foe (661 B.C.). Her temples were desecrated and plundered, her inhabitants

were butchered, her citizens that escaped the sword were sold as slaves. The hoarded treasures of many centuries—in gold, silver, precious stones, furniture, war appliances, chariots, and works of art—were carried away. Two lofty obelisks weighing 250 talents were removed." [1]

But the power of Egypt was not broken for ever. On the contrary, within a few years, under Psammetichus I., the first king of the 26th dynasty, she recovered in a marvellous manner. Psammetichus was a military genius. He was the first Egyptian sovereign to adopt the plan of using foreign troops to hold the garrisons which he built throughout the country. After protecting the country against invasion, he set himself to develop its trade, and even encouraged art and learning. The news of the recovery of Egypt reached Jerusalem. Once more the Egyptian party became dominant, and insisted upon refusing the tribute to Assyria and forming an alliance with Psammetichus. It was Jeremiah's turn to protest. Meantime Psammetichus died and was succeeded by his son Necho II. This king felt himself strong enough to go out to meet the Assyrians. Josiah, the king of Judah, threw himself in his way, and was disastrously beaten and slain in the valley of Megiddo. Necho and the Assyrians did not meet. While Necho waited at Riblah, Nineveh fell before the combined attack of the Medes and Babylonians. Necho returned to Egypt, having no desire to cross swords with the victorious Babylonians. And

[1] Knight, p. 311.

when at last they did meet at Carchemish, the Egyptian armies were routed by Nebuchadrezzar. The end of the kingdom of Judah was at hand. Jehoiakim, at the instigation of Necho, refused the Babylonian tribute. Nebuchadrezzar came up to Jerusalem. Jehoiakim was dead, but his son Jehoiachin was carried captive to Babylon, and Zedekiah was made king in Jerusalem.

MISCELLANEOUS ORACLES.

(Is. xxxii.–xxxv.)

NOTE.

Is. 34[14] "*the night-monster.*"—The Hebrew word is Lilith, a female demon stated by the Talmud to have been Adam's wife prior to Eve. She was regarded as the mother of the demons, and as of particular danger to infants. Lilith charms are still worn by the Jews as a protection against her.

AN HISTORICAL APPENDIX PARALLELED IN 2 KINGS XVIII.–XX.

(Is. xxxvi. 1–xxxix. 8.)

PROMISES OF DELIVERANCE.

(Is. xl.–xlviii.)

The Second Isaiah.

The Chaldeans, who now held Judah in their grasp, and from whose clutches the Exiles still hoped to be freed, were of the same Semitic race as the Babylonians and Assyrians. They originally occupied the most

southerly part of the country, on the shores of the Persian Gulf, where the Tigris and Euphrates pour their waters into the sea; but as they increased in power they spread northward and mixed with the Babylonians, their ambition being to annex Babylon to Chaldea. At the time of the Assyrian supremacy Babylonia was a dependency of the Northern State, and she looked upon the Chaldeans as welcome deliverers from the Assyrian yoke. At first the Chaldean kings ruled in Babylonia as vassals of Assyria, but with the fall of Nineveh and the collapse of the Assyrian power, Nabo-polassar, the Chaldean usurper, was able to release himself from the tyrant's grasp and proclaim himself a free king over the New Babylonian or Chaldean Empire, and to transmit his crown and kingdom to his son Nebuchadrezzar. Modern historians have not unjustly termed Nebuchadrezzar "The Great," for his is the most towering personality in the whole history of the ancient Orient. The forty-three years of his reign were spent for the most part in projects for the welfare of humanity. He rebuilt destroyed cities, restored ruined temples, cut canals, and established harbours for the safe and open regulation of commerce; and, though he was a warrior as well as a monarch, he used the power which his success in arms gave him more for the suppression of abuses and the benefit of the conquered peoples than for any selfish or personal ends. His death in 561 B.C. demonstrated the fact that the greatness of the new Chaldean Empire had depended entirely upon the person of its king, for his son Evil-

Merodach, a man of weaker character, was murdered two years after his accession by his brother-in-law Neriglissar, who occupied the throne in his stead until his own death four years later. He, in his turn, bequeathed the kingdom to his son, Labasi-Marduk, an incompetent and worthless fellow who was assassinated by his courtiers after a brief reign of only nine months. Nabonidus, the last Chaldean monarch, ascended the throne in 555 B.C.

These changes in the Chaldean government took place in the time of Ezekiel, Daniel, and the anonymous prophet who is now called Deutero-Isaiah; and the exiled Jews naturally watched the political situation with intense anxiety. Their hopes, too, of a speedy dissolution of the Chaldean Empire were raised by the significant movements of the great Cyrus, who had suddenly appeared in the East like a comet in the sky. Cyrus was an Aryan and king of Persia and of Anshan, or S. Elam, a dependency of Media. But he had shaken off the Median yoke, and in the year 550 B.C. he had taken their king, Astyages, prisoner, captured his capital, Ecbatana, and made himself master of the whole Median Empire.

The success of Cyrus was watched with alarm by the other powers, and Crœsus, king of Lydia, Nabonidus, king of Babylonia, with Amasis, the reigning Pharaoh in Egypt, formed an alliance to keep Cyrus in check. But four years later Lydia succumbed to his resistless courage, and the conquest of Babylonia was seen to be but a question of time. As its doom drew near,

prophecy, which had been dumb for half a century, again began to lift her voice. The victorious career of Cyrus created a delirium of joy and hope among the captives in Babylon, for deliverance not only meant the restoration of the Exiles to their beloved country, but it implied the triumph of Yahweh's cause and the advent of His Kingdom. To the prophetic mind there was no such thing as chance or mere events or occurrences. They believed that Yahweh Himself was animating the movement of the nations, and that history was directing itself to the consummation of His work. And so, just as Babylon had become synonymous with the powers of evil, so Cyrus was regarded as the approaching instrument of the Divine will, the saviour of the Jewish nation, and even the anointed of the Lord (Is. 45[1]).

It is this great event in history that forms the key to the prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah. The deliverance so fervently hoped for and foretold with such assurance by Deutero-Isaiah did actually take place. With that lightning-like rapidity peculiar to him, Cyrus overthrew the kingdom of Babylon and entered the capital on the 3rd of November, 538 B.C. From that day the Empire that Nebuchadrezzar had so gloriously built up ceased to exist, and within a year the exiled Jews were granted permission to return to their own land.

THE RESTORATION OF ZION.

(Is. xlix. 1–lv. 13.)

Cyrus.

The Exile had lasted for nearly half a century when Cyrus, "the Persian," the liberator of the Jews, "the shepherd and the anointed of Yahweh," began the career of conquest that left him master of Asia. Cyrus II. was the son of Cambyses I., and succeeded his father as ruler of Anshan, an Elamite province, about 559 or 558 B.C. In 550 B.C., and in the sixth year of Nabonidus, king of Babylonia, Cyrus came into conflict with Astyages, the Median king, and, aided by disaffection among the Medes, defeated him, and sacked Ecbatana, the royal city. By this victory Cyrus brought under his control the whole of Media, and the fusion of the two peoples became so complete that there is henceforward only one unit to consider, the Medo-Persian Empire, whose component parts were not more distinct than are Scotland and England to-day.

In the two years that this welding process occupied, the career of the new conqueror was being watched with considerable anxiety by the other great powers—Babylonia, Egypt, and Lydia. The first to take action was Lydia. Encouraged by the Delphic oracle, which, by declaring that if he crossed the Halys he would destroy a great empire, seemed to promise him success, Crœsus of Lydia crossed the river with his forces in the spring of 547 and occupied the fortress of Pteria,

in the north of Cappadocia. Cyrus, in his turn, led his army against the Lydians, and in the autumn of the year engaged the enemy in the neighbourhood of Pteria. An indecisive battle took place, but Crœsus felt it necessary to retreat across the Halys to Sardis with a view to spending the winter there till he should receive assistance from his allies. The winter, however, proved no obstacle to the hardy Persian troops, and before help could reach Lydia, Cyrus had marched direct on Sardis, broken the resistance of the hastily gathered troops of Crœsus, and had taken the city "by a stratagem similar to that employed in the capture of Quebec." Crœsus, like Astyages, was spared the usual fate of the royal captive, and appears to have retained afterwards an honourable position at the Persian court.

Having disposed of Lydia, Cyrus now placed the work of subjugating the Ionian Greeks in the hands of his general, Harpagus, and returned to the east to make a final reckoning with the turbulent tribes of Iran, the tableland of about "fifteen hundred miles in breadth stretching from the Tigris to the Indus and from the Persian Gulf to the present frontiers of Russia in Asia." The conquest and organization of these far-off regions occupied a period of some six years, from 545–539; but with their settlement Cyrus was at last able to turn to his great scheme of reducing Babylonia and bringing it under the Empire.

In Babylon the archæologically-minded Nabonidus had been allowing the affairs of the State to progress

as best they might, while he turned his attention to forming a museum in Babylon of the images and idols of the country. Disaffection was widespread in the capital, and the country districts were aroused to hostility by the desecration of their local shrines and the transference of their gods to the city. Thus it was not only the Jewish exiles who looked now with hope towards the coming of Cyrus. Babylonia itself was ready to hail him as her deliverer. Cyrus, no doubt well informed of the change that had come over the spirit of the country, felt that the time had at last arrived to carry his plans into action. He rapidly mobilized his army at Gutium, and, in October 538, he sent them forward under the leadership of Gobryas, to the north-east border of Babylonia. There they encountered the Babylonian army under Belshazzar, the son of Nabonidus, and the first and only battle of the campaign was fought. The victory of the Persian was complete, and two days later Gobryas entered Babylon. Some weeks after the surrender of the city, Cyrus himself arrived, and entered Babylon in triumph, amid the general rejoicing of the populace and the priests. The Jews alone seem to have felt some touch of disappointment, for the policy of toleration which Cyrus immediately announced accorded badly with the hopes of revenge that they had been cherishing in the long years of their captivity. They had sung of the day when the glory of Babylon should be overthrown like Sodom and Gomorrah. "It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to

generation. . . . Wolves shall cry in their castles, and jackals in the pleasant palaces : and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged " (Is. 13^{20-22}). However, Cyrus had no intention of letting one section of the inhabitants triumph at the expense of another, and the Jews had to be content with obtaining their freedom and the opportunity to return to Jerusalem.

It was in 536 that the first band of exiles who availed themselves of the king's decree set out on their journey to Palestine, under the leadership of Sheshbazzar, " prince of Judah," a son of Jehoiachin. The returning exiles brought back with them what remained of the sacred vessels removed by Nebuchadrezzar, and also, no doubt, gifts of money and materials from those who preferred the security and wealth of Babylon to the doubtful hospitality of Palestine. It is clear now that the first detachment was a very small one, and that its only hope of permanence in the land of Palestine was the guarantee of the Persian power. Many years passed before the little Jewish colony summoned sufficient courage to begin the work of rebuilding the Temple. Some attempt may indeed have been made by Sheshbazzar to go through the form of laying the foundation of the Temple in order to satisfy the decree of Cyrus; but the work was not undertaken in earnest till 519, and then as the direct result of the preaching of Haggai.

There are various accounts of the death of Cyrus, but all (except Xenophon) agree that he died in battle, either from sickness or from wounds, in the year 529, after reigning twenty-nine years. He was buried at

Pasargadae in his own native province, and his tomb was venerated until the breaking up of the Empire. To the writers of antiquity Cyrus was the "father of his people," the "amiable prince," "the generous," "surpassing all kings, in wisdom, virtue, and magnanimity." To the Hebrew prophets he was the man whom "Yahweh called in righteousness," and the inscriptions bear the same testimony: "An upright Prince," ruling in "faithfulness and righteousness." "Merodach, the great Lord, the Guardian of his people, joyfully beheld his good deeds and his upright heart."

TRITO-ISAIAH.

(Is. lvi. 1–lxvi. 24.)

The Third Isaiah.

The concluding portion of the book, namely, chaps. 56–66, shows a marked contrast to the rest, and is now generally regarded as a separate and distinct collection of prophecies. "A new spirit breathes through these oracles. The music is frequently in a minor key. We have passed from the brighter world of noble ideals and happy anticipation to the darker region of disillusionment. The language of bitter and stern rebuke is often heard. We are dwelling amid the hard realities of an evil world. Sabbaths and fasts are celebrated, but the evils of a hollow formalism and social oppression are as manifest as they were in the days of Amos." (Whitehouse.)

We are in the presence, moreover, of a settled religious community in the Judæan homeland, possessed of a sanctuary with an organized worship and definite traditions, but a community, alas, that has become degenerate, and has even reverted to the old forms of Canaanitish idolatry (Is. 57^{4-7}).

The remarkable difference between this portion of Isaiah and chaps. 40–56, and the striking parallels that may be found between the circumstances disclosed in these later chapters and those in the oracles of Malachi, clearly indicate this portion to be post-Exilic, that is to say, composed probably between B.C. 460 and 445. It is believed, too, that this last collection of prophecies was not written by Deutero-Isaiah, and of course not by Isaiah, who lived generations before the restoration, but by a third prophet who is now spoken of as Trito or Third Isaiah—to distinguish him from the two older writers. It is thought, moreover, that the oracles of Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah were united into the one work about 400 B.C., while the reference in Ecclus. 48^{23-25} to Is. 40^{1} and 41^{1-3} as being written by "Isaiah the prophet" shows that the entire collection of sixty-six chapters was formed by the time Ecclesiasticus was written, namely, B.C. 180 or earlier.

Darkness and Light.

Everywhere in Scripture darkness is alluded to as a time of trouble, misery, and terror. Thus Jeremiah cries, "Woe unto us! for the day declineth, for the

shadows of the evening are stretched out" (6[4]). Job laments "I have spread my couch in the darkness" (17[13]). In Ps. 35[6] there occurs the imprecation, "Let their way be dark and slippery," and in Ps. 91[5] there is the promise, "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night." Such instances could be multiplied almost indefinitely.

On the other side of the picture is the joy of sunlight. Thus Koheleth says, "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun" (Eccl. 11[7]), and everywhere where promises of happiness are given the simile of light is used. To the Oriental mind sunlight means light, life, and purity, and so of the just ruler it is said, "He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth" (2 Sam. 23[4]).

Darkness is abhorrent to the Eastern for several reasons. Firstly, night in the East is always a time of danger from robbers, who will break into houses by the simple expedient of digging a hole through the mud walls, as was done in Old Testament days (Job 24[16], Ezek. 12[5]). Secondly, the Oriental has a great dread of evil spirits, particularly of the "ginn," who occupy an intermediate position between human beings and angels, creatures who inhabit waste places and are able to assume the shapes of men, beasts, or monsters. They believe also in the ghosts of the dead, and on this account would never dare to sleep without a little olive lamp burning to keep away these uncanny nocturnal visitants (see art. LAMPS, p. 22). Thirdly, there are the dangers of the highways and streets. Marauding bands of

desperate characters have always infested the East and have been a menace to the peaceful traveller, and the woeful state of the roads makes travelling very precarious, so that "if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth" (Jn. 11^{10}), unless, perchance, he carries a lamp. Hence the allusion in Ps. 119^{105}: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." It is not one of the least of the dangers of darkness in the East that it is not preceded by twilight. Night descends without warning, and only a few minutes from the time of sunset, when the world is full of light, darkness falls like an impenetrable curtain so that people who are caught in a dangerous place may never emerge alive. Many allusions to this swiftness are found in the Bible, *e.g.*, Ps. 102^{11}, "My days are like a shadow that declineth," and 109^{23}, "I am gone like the shadow when it declineth," while the equal rapidity of the sunrise forms the thought of Song 2^{17}, where "the shadows flee away," and the cool of the early morning comes as a delight. As the sun rises the darkness is dispelled with all the magic of a stage effect, object after object springing into sight as by the wand of the enchanter. And so in Is. $60^{1.\ 2}$ the prophet says, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee," and in 58^{8}, "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning."

NOTE.

Is. 66^{24} "*And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and*

they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."—This verse is the basis of the later Jewish conception of Gehenna as the place of everlasting punishment. Gehenna is the Hebrew Ge-Hinnom (Valley of Hinnom), the place where of old human sacrifices were offered to Molech (Jer. 7^{31}), and for this reason desecrated by king Josiah (2 Kings 23^{10}). Afterwards it became a receptacle for filth and refuse, and Rabbinical tradition asserts that it was the custom to cast out unclean corpses there, to be burned or to undergo decomposition. This is in all probability the scene which had imprinted itself on the imagination of the writer, and which was afterwards projected into the unseen world as an image of endless retribution. The Talmudic theology locates the mouth of hell in the Valley of Hinnom. (Skinner.)

JEREMIAH.

JEREMIAH'S CALL AND EARLY DISCOURSES.

(Jer. i.–vi.)

The Political Situation at the Time of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah received the prophetic call in the thirteenth year of Josiah, 626 B.C., and he continued to utter his denunciations until some time after the fall of Jerusalem, 586 B.C., when he disappears from sight among those fugitive Jews who fled to Egypt.

He was born in the reign of Manasseh, under whose iniquitous government the gross rites of the Canaanitish idolatries held their sway, and he was a young man when Amon sat upon the throne. Thus Jeremiah's earlier preaching, like the prophecies of his contemporary, Zephaniah, reveals the prevalence of the heathen worship in Jerusalem, while gross profligacy, oppression, cruelty, and extortion mark the behaviour of Court and people.

The great event of Josiah's reign, which immediately followed that of Amon, was the discovery of the Book of the Law in the Temple, and the subsequent reformation which was brought about as a consequence of that

discovery ; and the events of that memorable time made a profound impression upon the young prophet. It was then that the local " high places," where the service of Yahweh was polluted with the Canaanitish customs, were finally done away with and the national worship was centralized at the Temple. Then, too, were the indigenous rites of Moloch- and Baal-worship abolished, with all those later idolatries imported from the East during the Assyrian supremacy. But to Jeremiah it was apparent that these reforms were only superficial, and though a definite religious system was formalized, a system which survived the Exile and afterwards made the groundwork of later Judaism, yet the hearts of the people were unchanged, the spiritual effects of the reformation were disappointing, and the national cohesion was a surface healing only.

Externally, the world was witnessing great and important changes. The giant power of Assyria which had dominated Israel for over a century was rapidly declining under the growth of the new Median State. The terrible Scythian nomads were swarming over the Caucasus passes, and spreading death and destruction along their path. Already Nahum had celebrated the downfall of Nineveh in his incomparable verses, and Assyria, attacked on every side, had renounced her hold upon Judah, whose king for the first time for several generations ruled as an independent sovereign.

That independence did not last long. Egypt, hitherto kept in check by Assyria, now attempted to seize the Western Provinces of that declining Power,

and, advancing through Palestine, Pharaoh-necho met Josiah in battle on the field of Megiddo, there defeating him and annexing the land which for three years was made subject to the Egyptian king. In that time Pharaoh deposed Shallum, the nation's choice, and replaced him on the throne by his brother Eliakim-Jehoiakim. But Egypt did not long retain her newly conquered territory, for the great battle of Carchemish, 605 B.C., decided the fate of Palestine, and Judah passed over into the hands of the Chaldeans.

From this time forward Babylon stands for the corrupting and tyrannous powers of the world, and she becomes for Scripture and for the Church the metropolis of the kingdom of Satan, just as Zion came to be regarded as the capital of the kingdom of the Saints. The Chaldean Empire was a revival of the Assyrian, less brutal and destructive and more highly civilized, but on that account more sensual and more refined in its vices and cruelty. The intense hatred and fear that the Jews bore towards the Chaldeans are reflected in the pages of Habakkuk. They were probably accentuated by the inclusion of the barbaric Scythians in Nebuchadrezzar's army.

Thus the defeat of Pharaoh-necho at Carchemish led to the transference of Jehoiakim's allegiance from Egypt to Babylon—an allegiance with which he kept faith for three years, when, apparently without reason and certainly with complete foolishness, he rebelled. The revolt was quelled by the Chaldean king, who first set loose a band of raiders over Judæa and then, four years later, marched in person to the capital just after

Jehoiakim's death. Jerusalem at once surrendered, and Jehoiakim's newly crowned successor, Jehoiachin (also called Jeconiah and Coniah), was carried captive to Babylon with the Queen-Mother and all the élite of the city. Nebuchadrezzar then placed Mattaniah-Zedekiah on the throne and retired with his army.

Zedekiah's reign was a repetition of Jehoiakim's. He failed perhaps more through weakness than through wickedness, his want of decision and his tremulous wavering being amply depicted in Jeremiah's graphic account of the final siege of Jerusalem. Like Jehoiakim, Zedekiah, in opposition to the advice of the prophet, rebelled against the Chaldean yoke, being led to do so by the clamour of public opinion, the specious promises of the "false prophets," and the impatient entreaties of the Babylonian exiles. Thus the Jewish people were launched on a struggle as hopeless as that which they undertook against Rome 650 years later. The rebellion of Zedekiah brought Nebuchadrezzar and his army once more before the gates of the capital. The siege was maintained for two years, until, reduced by famine, the capital was stormed, its king captured, tortured, and then slain, and the city set on fire. A few of the inhabitants escaped, many were killed, while many more were carried away to join those who had previously fallen into the hands of the Chaldeans, a feeble remnant of no political importance being left behind to eke out a living by agriculture. The greater number of these, alarmed by the failure of their conquerors to afford them protection against the

inroads of the Ishmaelites, fled to Egypt, Jeremiah pleading in vain with them to remain in Palestine. They replied that they had fared better in the days when they had worshipped the Queen of Heaven than when they had bowed to the national Yahweh, and they refused to listen to his persuasions. His prediction that the sword of Nebuchadrezzar would follow them even there was fulfilled by the Chaldean invasion of Egypt, *circa* 569 B.C.

AN ADDRESS AT THE GATE OF THE TEMPLE.

(JER. vii.–x.)

HEBREW FUNERARY AND MOURNING CUSTOMS.

Embalming, which was the regular method of dealing with a corpse in Egypt, was never the practice of Israel. Jacob and Joseph, it is true, were embalmed, but they were regarded as Egyptians and their bodies were disposed of according to the custom of the country. Sometimes the Hebrews anointed the dead body and placed it in spices, as in the case of Asa, who was laid in a "bed which was filled with sweet odours and divers kinds of spices prepared by the apothecaries' art" (2 Chron. 16^{14}); but this was not embalming as the art was understood by the Egyptians. The coffin also was an Egyptian custom not followed by the Hebrews, who used a bier, but only to carry the body to the grave (cf. 2 Sam. 3^{31}). The grave was sometimes dug in the ground in the modern fashion, or a space large

enough to hold the body was excavated in the face of a rock and the entrance closed with a stone slab. The family burial-place in Old Testament times was frequently a chamber in a natural or artificial cave, and there the various members of the family were laid to rest, having attained their desire "to sleep with their fathers." An interesting example of this kind of family tomb is the cave of Machpelah, where Sarah, Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, Leah, and Jacob were buried. The kings of Judah were generally buried in the royal burial-place at Jerusalem in the vicinity of the Temple, but of Manasseh we read that he "slept with his fathers, and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza" (2 Kings 21^{18}). Amon, his son, was also buried in his own grounds, "in his sepulchre in the garden of Uzza" (v.^{26}). For the town dwellers, who had no gardens or grounds of their own, there were cemeteries outside the walls of the city to which they brought their dead.

There are many passages in the Old Testament which reveal the intense passion of grief caused by bereavement: the grief of Abraham over the death of Sarah; Jacob mourning "many days" for the supposed death of his son; David lamenting over Absalom; Rachel refusing to be comforted. The Oriental does not bewail his loss to God, but to the world. To God his attitude is one of reverent submission. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." But his grief delivers itself of its burden to his friends and relatives.

The moment death has taken place in a house a loud shrill wail is raised by those present. This cry is taken up by those outside the house, and the friends and relatives, who are thus made aware of the death, join in the cry and come weeping and wailing to the home to take their place among the mourners. Describing her first experience of the death shriek, Dr. Amelia Edwards says: "All at once we heard a sound like the far-off quavering sound of many owls. It shrilled, swelled, wavered, dropped—then died away, like the moaning of the wind at sea. We held our breath and listened. We had never heard anything so wild and plaintive." Dr. Thomson describes it as like the cries of wild beasts in which no words can be distinguished. So, evidently, did the Hebrews wail for their dead. "For this," says the prophet Micah, "will I wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked: I will make a wailing like the jackals, and a mourning like the ostriches" (Mic. 1^{8}).

Immediately after death the body is washed and wrapped in white cotton, called "kaffan," the shroud, in preparation for the burial, which takes place as soon as possible, preferably before sunset of the same day. For the body to decompose is considered to be an indignity offered to the deceased. When the body is placed upon the bier the neighbours and the hired mourners, in addition to the relatives of the deceased, gather round it, or range themselves at opposite sides of the room and join in the mourning ceremony. "Call for the mourning women," says Jeremiah, "that they

may come; . . . and let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters" (Jer. $9^{17.\ 18}$). The women, kin to the dead, beat the breast, dishevel their hair, throw dust upon their head and face. Their loose robes are disordered and torn. They wave their arms wildly above their heads, uttering shriek upon shriek, and striking with their nails at their face and uncovered bosom. When the hour of the burial draws closer the tumult increases in intensity. Relatives lose all control of their feelings and have at last to be forcibly removed from the room. According to Trumbull, the Oriental wailing over the dead includes a calling of the dead by name, and a lamentation of his loss, with the recital of his virtues. They ejaculate such phrases as "O my master!" "O my glory!" "O my pride!" "O my strength!" "O camel of the house!" "Alas for him!" "Alas for him!" "Such cries as these are heard over the dead in the East to-day, as they were heard when King David wailed over his dead son Absalom: 'O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!' or when the mourners over the disobedient prophet at Bethel, in the days of Jeroboam, mourned over him, saying, 'Alas my brother!' or when the prophet Jeremiah said of the unworthy king Jehoiakim: 'They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah my brother! . . . they shall not lament for him, saying, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory!'"

Before sunset the funeral procession is to be seen

making its way towards the cemetery, and as it passes through the streets its numbers are swelled by those who join it to show respect towards the bereaved family and also to "share the merit which the Lord attaches to service performed for those who can no longer reward it."

Hosea speaks of the "bread of mourners" (9^4), which may refer to the feast at the conclusion of the funeral day fast. The presence of a large company of guests, some of whom come from a distance, frequently necessitates the provision of "funeral baked meats." Speaking of the funeral feast, Dr. Thomson says that the Bedawîn, when one of their number dies, "immediately bring his best ox or buffalo and slaughter it near to the body of the deceased. They then cook it all for a great feast, with burghul, rice, and whatever else good to eat they may possess. The whole tribe and neighbours also assemble for the funeral, and go direct from the grave to this sacrificial feast."

Among the funeral rites of the ancient Israelites we read of fasting, shaving the head or some portion of it, rending the clothes and wearing sackcloth, sitting in ashes, tearing the hair of the head and face, tattooing or cutting incisions in the flesh, and throwing earth or ashes on the head. Cutting the hair and lacerating the flesh are condemned by the Levitical Law, because of their association with the worship of the dead as observed among the Canaanites, and therefore incompatible with loyalty to Yahweh and His worship. Tully, in sketches of life in Morocco, describes a mourning scene in which the servants, slaves, and people hired

for the occasion wounded the veins of their temples with their nails, and allowed the blood, which they had thus caused to flow, to drop upon the bier while they chanted the song of death. Arab women, on the death of a husband, a father, or other near relative, frequently cut their hair and put it above the grave.

Another mourning custom of which we have frequent mention in the Old Testament is that of rending the clothes. "Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him" (2 Sam. 1^{11}). Along with this custom there is often mention of the putting on of sackcloth. "Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner" (2 Sam. 3^{31}). The rending of the outer garment is still customary among the Jews. The rent is usually made in the lapel of the coat, and must be not less than 4 inches long. The sackcloth with which the Israelites girded themselves was not intended to cover the whole body, but only to go round the loins. A recent commentator mentions in this connection that it was also an Arab custom to go half naked as a sign of mourning.

The period of mourning for the dead is variously given in the Old Testament, but the usual time seems to have been seven days. Joseph mourned seven days for his father. So also the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead mourned seven days for Saul and his sons. But for Aaron and Moses the public mourning lasted thirty days. Modern Judaism prescribes thirty days' mourning, and of these the first seven days, known as Shiva

"seven," are the most strict, days in which the mourners have to abstain from work, from saluting, from anointing, etc. From the eighth day to the thirtieth the mourning is of a less severe character. Bereaved children, however, are expected to mourn till the end of the year and to abstain from music and recreation.

PROPHECIES CULMINATING IN JEREMIAH'S PUBLIC PUNISHMENT IN THE STOCKS.

(Jer. xi. 1–xx. 18.)

NOTE.

Jer. 20[15] "*Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, A man child is born unto thee; making him very glad.*"—In the East, at the time of childbirth, the father waits outside for the news, hoping passionately for a son. (See art. Childhood in Palestine, vol. i. p. 273.) As no Oriental may curse his parents (Mark 7[10], Exod. 21[17]), Jeremiah curses the messenger who brought the news.

MISCELLANEOUS PROPHECIES.

(Jer. xxi.–xxviii.)

The Life of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah belonged to a priestly family residing at Anathoth some 3½ miles north-east of Jerusalem. His father's name was Hilkiah, identified by some as belonging to the line of Abiathar, the High Priest of David. His mother's name is not known, but that she was a pious woman is inferred from Jeremiah's testimony

when he says, "Now the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee" (1[4. 5]). His call to the prophetic function came in the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign, at a time when Jeremiah was really below the age at which a man was considered eligible for the official work, and he records the fact that for that reason he hesitated to obey the Divine order (1[6]). His ministry thereafter extended through the reigns of the four kings who succeeded Josiah, and was prolonged until after the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadrezzar.

Jeremiah's task was one of the hardest that could fall to any man, for his message was not only a sore one for any patriot to deliver, but one certain to arouse opposition among his people. Thus his ministry at the very outset was revealed to him as one long martyrdom, for he was told to stand as "a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls, against the whole land" (1[18]), a solitary impregnable fortress for Yahweh. Not only so, but in order that he might be, in person as well as in word, a prophet of coming tribulation, marriage was forbidden him, together with all participation in domestic life (16[1–5]), a sentence that must have been very bitter to a man of such a tender and affectionate nature. In the early days of his vocation as a prophet, Jeremiah seems to have worked very quietly, though we know from his own pen that he suffered relentless persecution from the inhabitants of his native village (11[19–23]), the climax of his unpopularity being reached

soon after the discovery of the Law Book in the Temple during the reign of Josiah. The prophet regarded the reformation which followed as a failure. "It came from the will of the King rather than from the conscience of the people. It effected no 'circumcision of the heart,' no inward turning to Jehovah, no such 'breaking up of the fallow ground,' as Jeremiah called for. The cant of religion was in the mouths of the ungodly, and apostasy had simply given way to hypocrisy."

These unpalatable truths roused such indignation that the prophet was forced to leave Anathoth and take refuge in Jerusalem, but their justification was soon demonstrated when Josiah's death on the field of Megiddo pricked the bubble of the national religiousness, and the nation sank again into its old indifference under the rule of the succeeding kings. At this time Jeremiah retired into seclusion for twelve years during which no word came from him.

His emergence from obscurity was dramatic in the extreme. He suddenly appeared in Jerusalem wearing a soiled girdle as a symbol of the corruption of Judah, and foretelling the destruction of the capital. Especially did he exhort the King (Jehoiakim) and the Queen-Mother to humble themselves and acknowledge their peril, prophesying that the Temple itself would be utterly destroyed unless a radical conversion was apparent. But such words were regarded as monstrous blasphemy; violent scenes took place, and the death of Jeremiah was loudly called for, his life being saved only with great difficulty (Chap. 26).

The prophet, however, was not so easily deterred from the pursuit of a course which he believed had been mapped out for him by the Divine will, and it was not long before he was again in Jerusalem foretelling the approaching judgment. This time he took with him a potter's earthen jar which he dashed to pieces before the people, with the fiery declaration that in the same way would the Lord of Hosts break the city and the people (Chap. 19).

A fresh outbreak immediately occurred. The infuriated crowd attempted personal violence, and Pashur, the deputy High Priest, had Jeremiah seized, scourged, and put into the stocks at one of the Temple gates, where the prophet remained a whole day and night exposed to the gibes of the mocking crowd. With the descent of darkness Jeremiah was left alone, and there in the silence of the city he passed the dismal hours of the night in alternate moods of bitterness and resignation, at one time cursing the day he was born, the next singing the power and deliverance of Yahweh.

This tragic episode, so realistically told in the 20th chapter of his prophecy, has been called Jeremiah's Gethsemane. It took place just before the crisis of the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the time when the Roll of Doom was prepared (Chap. 36), and the time, too, of the battle of Carchemish, when Nebuchadrezzar was hailed as Yahweh's servant and executioner (Chap. 25) because he had defeated the hated Egyptian.

The writing of the famous Roll (probably the first twenty chapters of the present Book of Jeremiah), begun

in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, was not completed until the ninth month of the fifth year. In that month a good opportunity occurred for letting the people hear its contents, for the king had proclaimed a fast and had summoned all Judah to attend in the Temple, and there the Roll was read by Baruch the scribe, for Jeremiah dared not go into public himself. The effect upon the people was profound. They listened anew to prophecies which they had forgotten, appeals which they had scorned, and judgments which they had laughed at, all of which were now on the eve of fulfilment. A great fear came upon them. They saw clearly that only a true and general repentance could now save the kingdom. But no step could be taken without the king, and Jehudi, an officer, was appointed to read the Roll to him. This was at once done, but no sooner was it apparent that the Roll foretold that Jerusalem would fall into the hands of the Chaldeans than Jehoiakim refused to listen longer; and taking the manuscript from the officer, he angrily cut it in pieces with a knife and threw the destroyed pages into the fire.

Thus were finally severed the ties which had bound prophecy to the secular throne since the days of Samuel. Orders were immediately given to apprehend Jeremiah and Baruch; but they escaped by hiding, the time of their enforced concealment being spent in rewriting and amplifying the destroyed prophecy.

For about six years after this incident Jeremiah remained silent, during which time the doom of Judah was finally sealed—Jehoiakim slain by the Chaldeans,

his son Coniah with the nobles of the land carried captive to Babylon, and the whole country falling under the yoke of Nebuchadrezzar. On his re-emergence the efforts of the prophet were directed, in this new condition of affairs, to secure a loyal obedience to the Babylonian government so that there might at least be preserved the foundations of a future kingdom. To carry out this purpose Jeremiah had a double task to perform, namely, to persuade the Jews in Babylonia to settle down peaceably in the land of their captivity, and to urge those in Jerusalem to submit quietly to the rule of Nebuchadrezzar. But in this he found himself once more in opposition to the will of king and people. Ambassadors from Moab, Edom, Ammon, Zidon, and Tyre, all desirous to shake off the Chaldean tyranny, had come to Jerusalem to concert measures with Zedekiah. The soothsayers of these lands encouraged them to rebel, the false prophets of Jerusalem flattered the people with vain hopes, urgent letters of entreaty were sent from the captives in Babylonia urging this mad scheme forward. Then Jeremiah followed the example of Isaiah, a hundred years before, in the days of the Assyrian dominion.

He went to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem wearing a wooden yoke, and carrying other yokes, which he placed upon the backs of the ambassadors, as an intimation that there could be no reversal of the past, and that the Chaldean yoke must be borne. The authority which his thirty-five years of faithful ministry had won gave weight to his words, and the constant

sight of the prophet walking through the streets of the capital with the yoke upon his neck served as a witness to the people of the subjugation which Yahweh had appointed them, and the proposed league against Babylon was temporarily abandoned. But history repeats itself, and just as the people first listened to the advice of Isaiah and then afterwards disregarded it, so, in the present case, the infatuation of King Zedekiah and of his government could not be controlled. The rebellion which Jeremiah had stamped out gathered head five years later, and led to the final siege of the unfortunate capital by the Chaldeans.

The approach of an Egyptian force, promised to Zedekiah, led to a temporary raising of the siege, and caused the most immoderate joy in the beleaguered city. But, alas, these days of confidence and congratulation were darkened by a disgraceful breach of faith. The necessities of the siege had suggested the revival of an ancient custom by which the Hebrew slaves were freed after six years' service, and so, in order to obtain extra fighting men, the slaves had been solemnly liberated in accordance with this old decree. But when the danger was thought to be at an end, the government basely violated their pledged word and ordered the slaves back to servitude. This vile deed so enraged Jeremiah that he hurled the most terrible denunciations at the heads of the guilty perjurers. By so doing he made enemies among the ruling classes, who, taking advantage of the prophet's visit to Anathoth in connection with his estate there, accused him of attempting

a desertion to the Chaldeans and thereby procured his imprisonment. Not content with this, his most bitter foes, those who were at the head of the Egyptian party, cast him into the pit of the prison where he would have died had he not been rescued by the timely help of one of the Court eunuchs, who thereafter secured the interference of the king on Jeremiah's behalf, and the prophet was kept in milder confinement until the Fall of Jerusalem.

It was during this dark period of the latter days of the besieged city that Jeremiah manifested by a striking act the assurance he felt of a bright future for his unfortunate country. He bought, with all the usual legal formalities, some property at Anathoth, declaring that fields and vineyards should again be possessed in the land (32^{6-15}), an act which has been compared to the sublime purchase in Rome for its full value of the land upon which the army of Hannibal was encamped. The fate of Jerusalem was soon fulfilled. After being defended with the wild courage of despair, it was finally captured on the 9th of July, 586 B.C. By the Chaldean conquerors Jeremiah was treated with kindness and consideration, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, being specially charged to protect him. He was also given the option of remaining in Judah or of going to Babylon. He chose the former, and attached himself to Gedaliah, the son of his friend Anikam, who was appointed governor over the cities of Judah, until the murder of Gedaliah led the aged prophet to accompany those who fled to Egypt.

In that country he closed a life which had been full

of suffering. Bitter contentions had arisen among his fugitive countrymen, and tradition states that he was stoned to death by the infuriated mob.

A LETTER TO THE EXILES.

(Jer. xxix. 1–32.)

The Postal Systems of the Ancient East.

The first reference in the Bible to letters being sent by "posts" is in connection with the solemn Passover proclaimed by King Hezekiah, when we read that, from Beersheba "even to Dan," the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah (2 Chron. 30^{6}).

In the Book of Esther it is stated that "posts went forth in haste by the king's commandment," with the fatal decree that Haman obtained from King Ahasuerus to destroy the Jews. But Mordecai, who had been elevated to the rank and office of Haman, "sent letters by posts on horseback, and riders on mules, camels, and young dromedaries" in the name of Ahasuerus, who had been persuaded to annul the decree (Est. 3^{13-15} 8^{10-14}).

"Under Cyrus the postal system was greatly developed, this wise monarch seeking to abridge the vast distances of his world-wide Empire by the making of roads. At specified points along these were stations where the postmen carrying the mails would find fresh horses and riders who would be ready to make instant start the moment the dispatches were transferred. These couriers were called 'Angoroi,' and were believed

to be the swiftest in the world. So in Jer. 51[31] there occurs the verse 'one post shall run to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken,' and so the simile occurs in Job 9[25] 'my days are swifter than a post.'" (Clifton, *Persia of To-day.*)

PROPHECIES OF RESTORATION.

(Jer. xxx. 1–xxxi. 40.)

Eastern Gardens.

It is characteristic of the Eastern landscape that the fields are not separated one from another by hedges, railings, or ditches as in the West, but are simply demarcated by a few rough stones, the "landmark" of Deut. 19[14]. But here and there one may suddenly come across an enclosure where the rich green foliage offers a striking contrast in the hot months to the arid burnt-up waste all around. These are the "watered gardens" so continually referred to in the Old Testament as places of refreshment and delight, as, for example, "thou shalt be like a watered garden" (Is. 58[11]); "their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all" (Jer. 31[12]); and "I made me gardens and parks, and I planted trees in them of all kinds of fruit: I made me pools of water, to water therefrom the forest where trees were reared" (Eccl. 2[5,6]).

For the Oriental garden is an orchard, not a flower garden, and there is no thought of bordered walks or green turf with ornamental beds. The ground is levelled, if necessary, by a series of terraces, and laid

out in narrow shallow drills, which are irrigated from a well, the water of which is drawn by a rude machine worked by a donkey or an ox which painfully toils round with deadly monotony. This water is then conducted along channels, and as each furrow gets its sufficiency it is closed at the end by the naked foot and the stream directed along a new course. "When Moses, speaking of Egypt, says to Israel: 'Thou wateredst it with thy foot, like a garden of green vegetables' (Deut. 11^{10}), he refers to the fact that, in the rainless land of the Pharaohs, farm-culture needs irrigation in the same way as garden-culture requires it in the more favoured climate of Palestine, where sufficient rain falls to raise the main crops."[1]

The usual garden trees are olive, fig, orange, lemon, citron, pomegranate, palm, almond, apricot, peach, banana, and occasionally apple and pear trees. Olive and fig trees are planted sufficiently apart to allow of wheat or barley being sown between them.

EPISODES IN THE LIFE OF JEREMIAH.

(JER. xxxii.–xxxiii.)

NOTES.

Jer. 32^{7} "*Anathoth.*"—The modern Anata, 2½ miles N.E. of Jerusalem. It is mentioned as a city of the priests in Josh 21^{18}. See also 1 Kings 2^{26}. "The landscape of Anathoth supplied to Jeremiah's imagination its broad framework, the "hills of Ephraim" (4^{15} 31^{6}), "the pride of Jordan" (12^{5} 49^{19}), and the "bare heights" on either side

[1] James Neil.

of Jordan ($3^{2.\ 21}$ 4^{11} 7^{29}). So, too, the withering effect of its prevalent east winds would naturally suggest to his mind the figure used in 4^{11}. (Streane.)

Jer. $23^{10.\ 11}$ "*I subscribed the deed, and sealed it, and called witnesses. . . . I took the deed of the purchase, both that which was sealed . . . and that which was open.*"—Contracts stamped upon clay tablets have been found in Babylonia enclosed in an envelope of clay, on the outside of which was written a duplicate of the contract.

Jer. 32^{14} "*Put them in an earthen vessel.*"—Earthen jars containing such duplicate contracts as referred to in $32^{10.\ 11}$ have been excavated.

INCIDENTS CONNECTED WITH THE SIEGE.

(Jer. xxxiv.)

The following articles bear upon this chapter:

Nebuchadrezzar, p. 219.
Ancient Warfare, p. 59.

THE INCIDENTS OF THE RECHABITES AND THE BURNING OF THE ROLL.

(Jer. xxxv.–xxxvi.)

Ancient Books.

For many centuries after the art of writing had been discovered nothing approaching our idea of a "book" existed. The earliest literary attempts were probably scratched upon stone or wood, and to such media there are several references in the O.T. Thus in Job 19^{23-24} the words occur:

> "Oh that my words were now written!
> Oh that they were inscribed in a book!
> That with an iron pen and lead
> They were graven in the rock for ever!"

Whether the third line of this passage means that the incisions were filled with lead for greater permanence or that the writing was done on lead is not known. In Ezek. 37^{16} wood is spoken of as a writing material: "take thee one stick, and write upon it," while in Is. 8^{1} the words "take thee a great tablet, and write upon it with the pen of a man" probably refer to the use of a metal plate.

The ancient Babylonians used "books" of clay, and these were books in the modern sense of a consecutive literary composition. Clay was carefully prepared and shaped into a tablet somewhat of the size and form of a tablet of toilet soap as used to-day. A scribe then employed a stylus and wrote upon the clay while it was soft, the instrument cutting the wedge-shaped cuneiform letters. Apparently the tablet was placed upon small pegs so that, when both sides were used, the under surface was not obliterated by pressure upon the writing-table. The tablet was then baked to a great hardness and relegated to the "library shelves" in its proper sequence. Tens of thousands of these tablets have been found. In the library of Ashurbanipal alone over 30,000 have been discovered, the books covering a great variety of subjects, such as history, religion, science, etc.

The Egyptians had the greatest veneration for writing, and have handed down to posterity a considerable library of papyrus rolls. The papyrus reed grew very abundantly on the banks of the Nile, and appears to have been used in two ways. The leaves of the plant

were stitched together so as to make a long sheet, one set of leaves being pasted crosswise over the other to make the roll strong, while the pulp of the reed was also made into a species of paper. The writing was done in ink. The Hebrew documents which came to be incorporated into the Canon of the O.T. were in the form of rolls of papyrus or skin, on which the lettering was done with ink.

The O.T. gives little information as to schools or methods of literary instruction. The common people were probably unable to read, as is to be inferred from Is. 29^{12}: "Read this I pray thee; and he saith, I am not learned"; but such was the case in all countries, unless, perhaps, ancient Babylonia was an exception. Publication was usually effected by recitation, so that one book would suffice for a large community. Thus Solomon's wisdom is pictured as being spoken, not written, so that those who wished to benefit by it had to attend the recitations in person (1 Kings 4^{32-34}). When Jeremiah's prophecies were written, the fact was sufficiently unusual to provoke comment: "And they asked Baruch, saying, Tell us now, How didst thou write all these words at his mouth? Then Baruch answered them, He pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and I wrote them with ink in the book" (Jer. $36^{17, 18}$). At the time of Habbakuk reading appears to have been a more common accomplishment. "And the Lord . . . said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it" (Hab. 2^{2}). In the post-Exilic times the Jews possessed

libraries. Thus in Dan. 9^2 the writer conceives of the O.T. as a library, and in Eccl. 12^{12} there is the complaint that too many books were written, while in 2 Macc. 2^{13} libraries are actually spoken of as being founded.

Authorship was largely anonymous, and titles were usually omitted. Thus in Babylonia and Assyria the tablets were simply numbered, or indicated by the first word written. The books of the Pentateuch were similarly without titles in the Hebrew MS. Genesis, for example, is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word *Bereshith*, "Beginning," with which the book opens. And because book writing was mostly compilation in which various people took part, authorship was collective rather than individual. Moreover, any one might add to a manuscript. Books were not published as a completed and inviolable content. On the contrary, it was an evidence of vitality in a document that posterity should find it worthy of emendation. A book therefore continued to grow long after its original compiler or compilers had passed away. Thus it is that there is no Hebrew word corresponding to our "author," but only a word for "writer" (*sofer*), and the writer was primarily a medium. What a man said at that early period was of greater import than what he wrote, and verbal utterances were handed down with scrupulous accuracy. It was only when an individual sank to the grade of a mere writer that his product became common property. So it has happened that the greatest of the world's teachers did not write, though they shaped the course of human events to a far larger extent than

writers have ever done. This is particularly evident in the case of Christ.

THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM.

(JER. xxxvii.–xliv.)

NEBUCHADREZZAR.

With the capture of Nineveh by the Medes in 607 or 606 B.C. the Assyrian Empire, which had endured for more than a thousand years, came to an end. The signs of its collapse had been apparent for some time, and when the decisive blow was struck by the Medes, Assyria's enemies were already gathered together to share in the spoil. To the Chaldeans, who were now, under Nabopolassar, masters at Babylon, there fell the Mesopotamian territory of Assyria. To the Medes there came the old territory of Assyria and the northern provinces reaching as far west as the Halys, while Egypt was made secure of the western provinces that she had already taken from Assyria. But the former allies soon began to quarrel among themselves. Necho II., not content with his gains in Palestine and Syria, set out with an army from Egypt with the intention of extending, if possible, his conquests in the north, and acquiring some of the territory beyond the Euphrates that had fallen to the lot of Nabopolassar. He reached Carchemish on the Euphrates without encountering opposition, but there he was confronted by the Chaldean army under the command of Nebuchadrezzar,

the eldest son of Nabopolassar. In the fierce battle that ensued the Egyptians sustained a crushing defeat, and were pursued by Nebuchadrezzar to the border of Egypt. As the result of the battle of Carchemish (605 B.C.) Egyptian suzerainty in Syria and Palestine was destroyed, and the Chaldean authority established in its place.

It is probable that Nebuchadrezzar would have sealed the fate of Egypt by crossing the border with his forces, had he not been recalled to Babylon by the death of his father. On his return to the capital no obstacle was put in the way of his accession, which took place in the year 604 B.C.

Of the wars that followed little information is to be obtained from the Chaldean inscriptions, which are concerned mainly with the building operations of the new king; but a certain amount of knowledge can be gleaned from outside sources, especially from the Hebrews, who were the first to trouble the peace of the kingdom. Jehoiakim, king of Judah, after paying tribute for three years, was at length induced by popular feeling to throw off his allegiance to his Chaldean master. The prophet Jeremiah alone seems to have been far-sighted enough to perceive the folly of the reactionaries at Jerusalem and the inevitable catastrophe. Jehoiakim indeed did not live to see the capture of Jerusalem, but when his young son, Jehoiachin, ascended the throne, the city was already besieged by the Chaldean forces, and in 597 Jerusalem fell to Nebuchadrezzar; its king and court were carried

away to Babylon, and more than 10,000 of its inhabitants removed as captives. Over the Judæans who were left Nebuchadrezzar placed Zedekiah, a son of Josiah.

In the ninth year of his reign, mainly as the result of the plotting of Pharaoh Hophra, Zedekiah was prevailed upon to rebel against the power that had raised him to the throne, and once more Jerusalem was besieged. A diversion was caused by Hophra, who crossed the Egyptian border with an army to the relief of his ally. The Chaldeans were forced for the moment to raise the siege, but the rejoicings of Jerusalem were premature. Jeremiah alone remained undeceived, reiterating his warning: "The Chaldeans shall come again and fight against this city; and they shall take it, and burn it with fire. . . . Deceive not yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us: for they shall not depart. For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained but wounded men among them, yet should they rise up every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire." And so it came to pass. The Egyptians were totally defeated; the siege of Jerusalem was resumed, and the city was taken again in July 586, at the end of a year and a half. Zedekiah was captured and taken before Nebuchadrezzar. His sons were slain in his sight, and thereafter his eyes were put out—"that his last sight of earth might be one of horror." The city was given over to the Chaldean soldiery, plundered of its rich treasures, and then set on fire. A large number, from the best and wealthiest

of the population, were removed to Babylonia, and only the lowest class were left to carry on the cultivation of the land and the affairs of the ruined city. Nebuchadrezzar appointed another native governor in Gedaliah, but his death at the hands of one of his own countrymen soon followed, and with his murder Jewish rule in Jerusalem came to an end.

Nebuchadrezzar now directed his arms against Tyre. For thirteen years (585–573 B.C.) the investment of this city, founded on the sea, dragged on; but at the end of that time Tyre finally capitulated and received easy terms from the Chaldean.

From Tyre, Nebuchadrezzar turned to the attack of Egypt. How far he penetrated into the interior of the country is not known, but he does not seem to have made any attempt to subjugate the country. After defeating Amasis, who had succeeded Hophra on the throne, Nebuchadrezzar plundered the country extensively and returned to Babylon with his spoils. With the campaign against Egypt the records of Nebuchadrezzar's wars cease, and possibly this was his last undertaking against any people.

In peace Nebuchadrezzar turned with the greatest joy to the embellishment of his capital city, Babylon, the strengthening of her fortifications and the rebuilding and beautifying of her temples. He completed and strengthened the two great walls of Babylon that his father had erected, and added defences even beyond these, by constructing to the east of the city another massive wall with a moat in front of it, and slightly less

formidable outworks on the west. To the north he built a lofty citadel to render even more impregnable the defences at this point, and to command the level tracts of the surrounding country. Having fortified the city in this manner, he added to it, according to Berosus, a new and splendid palace; and "by planting there what was called a hanging garden and replenishing it with all sorts of trees, he made it resemble exactly the scenery of a mountainous country. This he did to please his queen, because she had been brought up in Media, and was fond of mountainous surroundings." (Nebuchadrezzar had married Amytis, daughter of Astyages, king of the Medes.) In addition to his reconstruction of the great temple of Merodach at Babylon, Nebuchadrezzar also restored the principal temples of Babylonia, notably those at Sippar and Borshippa.

In the year 561 B.C. Nebuchadrezzar died, leaving his throne to his son Evil-Merodach. "Of his last years," says Rogers, "we know nothing but continued building, and of his last days and the final cause of his death we have no Babylonian record. The story of the Book of Daniel, that his great pride had a deep fall, and that his reason was lost, and that he was left to suffer of a madness which made him conceive himself a beast of the field, finds no mention in any record of his own race." (Josephus, however, places on record a tradition regarding the last days of Nebuchadrezzar similar in substance to the account in Daniel.) "It might well be a day of mourning in all Babylon when

the great king died. Unto the very ends of the earth he had made the name of Babylon great."

MISCELLANEOUS ORACLES.

(Jer. xlv.–li.)

Elam.

Beyond the lower reaches of the Tigris, to the east of Babylonia, lay the ancient and powerful kingdom of Elam, the "highland" as the name is translated. This region, which is practically the same as modern Khuzistan, included the rich fertile plain between the river and the mountains as well as a large portion of the hill-country. Its capital from the earliest times was Susa, known to us, in the Book of Esther, as Shushan, and as the modern Sus. The city stood in the plain commanding the main entrance to the mountains, and about 30 miles distant from them. "It is difficult to conceive," says Loftus, "a more imposing site than Susa. . . . Its great citadel and buildings raising their heads above groves of date, konar, and lemon trees surrounded by rich pastures and golden seas of corn; and backed by the distant snow-clad mountains." It was here that the kings of Elam resided, retiring to the coolness of the highlands in the summer heat. And here also in a sacred grove, into which no stranger might penetrate, dwelt the god Susinak, the local deity of Susa, of whom Ashurbanipal, the Assyrian king, relates that no one ever saw the form.

Throughout the history of Babylonia we can trace an almost constant struggle with Elam, its powerful and dangerous neighbour on the east. At the period referred to in Gen. 14 Elam appears to have been the predominant power in Lower Mesopotamia. Chedorlaomer (Kudur-Lagamar, "the servant of the god Lagamar"), king of Elam, had extended his power over a large portion of western Asia, and among his vassals we find the name of Amraphel, king of Shinar, or Babylonia. "One of the means employed by Kudur-Lagamar to aggrandize his suzerainty, as well as to consolidate his power, was to carry out the traditional policy of the leading Babylonian states, of spoiling and tolling the Westland with its precious woods and spices and minerals. So valuable to him was the occupation of Palestine that a revolt of the leading communities there brought upon them the whole force of the Elamitic army, together with the vassals and allies from far and near. The issue of this attempt was at first successful, and it seemed likely that the subjection of Palestine might be continued much longer, but the surprise and defeat of the victorious Easterners, upon their return march, put an end to Elamitic influence in the West." [1]

Shortly after this event the Elamitic occupation of Babylonia itself came to an end. The liberator of Babylon was Hammurabi, who not only drove out the alien invaders from the land, but united the various states into a single kingdom of which he made himself the head.

[1] J. F. McCurdy, *History, Prophecy and the Monuments.*

When the rise of the Assyrian Empire began to threaten Babylonia, Elam made common cause with the Babylonians, and especially the Chaldeans of the south. It was a struggle for self-preservation for Elam as well as for Babylonia, and the union of these former enemies delayed for long the Assyrian conquest. But the end came at last with the entry of the Assyrian Ashurbanipal into the conflict. In a series of campaigns, culminating in the sack of Susa about 645 B.C., Ashurbanipal completely reduced Elam and deported numbers of its inhabitants. Upon the breaking up of the Assyrian Empire, Elam fell into other hands, the north being occupied by the Medes and the south by the Persians.

The following articles bear upon the verses specified :

Jer. 47^{5} 48^{37} Hebrew Funerary and Mourning Customs, p. 198.
$49^{19.\ 22}$ The First Vision of Daniel, p. 265.
50^{3} Cyrus, p. 185.

HISTORICAL APPENDIX.

(JER. lii.)

The following articles bear upon this section :

Ancient Warfare, p. 59.
Jerusalem, p. 70.
Nebuchadrezzar, p. 219.

LAMENTATIONS.

The Book of Lamentations.

In the year 586 B.C. Nebuchadrezzar captured Jerusalem, put out the eyes of Zedekiah, the Jewish king, slew the princes of the blood, burned the Temple and the palaces, destroyed the walls, and deported the population to Babylon. These events and their religious significance form the theme of the five poems which comprise the Book of Lamentations. The poet looked on these calamities as the death of the Jewish people, and he prepared an elegy for a national funeral. The metre he uses is the measure that was adopted by the mourning women who chanted the funerary dirges, "a peculiar limping rhythm, in which the second member as it were dies and expires." It is a measure met with in Amos, Isaiah, and Ezekiel wherever a deep impression was intended to be made upon their hearers. It is known as the Kinah or elegiac measure. The name Lamentations is derived from the Latin Vulgate. It is the Latin rendering of the Hebrew word *Kinoth*, which is also the title of David's funeral song over Abner in 2 Sam. 3^{33}, and of the dirge composed by Jeremiah on the death of Josiah in the battle of Megiddo

(2 Chron. 35[25]). Partly on account of this latter fact, and partly on other internal evidence, tradition has assigned the authorship of Lamentations to Jeremiah, an authorship now questioned. The form of the Book is acrostic, and it has been suggested that such an arrangement would facilitate the memorizing of the poems by the captives in Babylon.

ANALYSIS.

CHAP. I. describes the ruin of Jerusalem and the humiliation of the exiles.

CHAP. II. acknowledges that this misfortune is the result of national sin, and is occasioned by Yahweh's righteous anger.

CHAP. III. has been called "the triumph song of ethical optimism." It recounts the national misery, perceives the Divine purpose, and calls for repentance.

CHAP. IV. describes the contrast between the present affliction of the Holy City and its past history.

CHAP. V. recapitulates the trials of Zion, and closes with a prayer for mercy and a renewal of the ancient blessing.

The Book of Lamentations is still read every year by the Jews to commemorate the burning of the Temple, and it is also read each week at the "Wailing Place" at Jerusalem just outside the Temple area. "There the Jews assemble every Friday afternoon and on festivals to bewail the downfall of the holy city. I saw on Good Friday a large number, old and young, male and female, venerable rabbis with patriarchal beards and young men kissing the stone wall and watering it

with their tears. They repeat from their well-worn Hebrew Bibles and Prayer-books the Lamentations of Jeremiah and suitable psalms. . . . This elegy, written with sighs and tears, has done its work most effectually in great public calamities, and is doing it every year on the ninth of the month Ab (July), when it is read with loud weeping in all the synagogues of the Jews and especially at Jerusalem. It keeps alive the memory of their deepest humiliation and guilt and the hope of final deliverance. The scene of the Wailing Place was to me touching and pregnant with meaning." (Schaff, *Through Bible Lands.*)

EZEKIEL.

INAUGURAL VISIONS.

(Ezek. i.–iii.)

The Book of Ezekiel.

The Book of Ezekiel is our first introduction to the Jews who were carried captive to Babylonia, and Ezekiel is the first prophet of the Exile.

The Assyrians were the originators of this means of subjugating rebellious tribes, and whenever they chanced to come upon an especially hardy nationality which offered determined opposition in its struggle for existence, it was their custom to expel the entire people from their fatherland and drag them into the heart of the Assyrian Empire, while they filled the depopulated country with Assyrian colonists.

The reason of this harsh treatment lay in the strong bond of union which united a country to its gods. Religion in those days was an integral part of every nation, and was indissolubly bound up with the soil. A nation's country was the home and dwelling-place of its peculiar Deity, and to be torn away from the land of one's birth was equivalent to being separated from the Divine Being on whom their happiness and

fortune depended. Exile therefore meant the destruction of a race, and was regarded as a sure and deadly punishment. A captive people never revolted. Their heart was broken.

When the Hebrews were carried away from Judah they were settled in masses at various points in the Babylonian Empire, a special quarter in each town being allocated to them. There they were permitted to dwell in comparative freedom, surrounded by a native population, and were regarded as quite harmless. The example of Ezekiel shows that they married and owned property, and no doubt they cultivated the soil and traded like those about them. Probably, too, the Babylonian government would have allowed them to build altars and temples to their God had they so desired; but it never occurred to the Jews to put up in an unclean land any building in honour of Yahweh. Such an act would have been thought an insult to, and a mockery of, the God of Israel. But though many of these sacred privileges were thus denied to the exiles there were yet many religious influences which were brought to bear upon them, and which resulted in the complete transformation of Israel and the creation of the cult known afterwards as Judaism.

This time of affliction was, to use the expression of Amos, as a sieve in which the people were sifted, for an extraordinary strength of character was needed to remain steadfast in the faith of their fathers and to resist the effect which the grandeur of their new surroundings must have had upon them. There were

also great personal advantages which accrued to the Jew who renounced his nationality and became a Babylonian, and such temptations could be resisted only by really earnest and religious spirits. Thus the faint-hearted, the lukewarm and the worldly-minded drifted away and left that sacred remnant hoped for by Isaiah, a remnant composed of the best and noblest souls of the people.

These chosen few kept their faith alive by the reading of the Book of Deuteronomy, by the strict observance of their national Sabbath, by carefully recording the religious history of the past, and by sitting at the feet of such men as Ezekiel, listening to their warnings, encouraged by their example, and led to trust in a brighter future by their dreams of a glorious restoration.

NOTE.

Ezek. 3[1] "*eat this roll.*"—The Arabs employ a similar idiom to-day. Thus they speak of eating a great rain when they have been thoroughly drenched with a shower. If bastinadoed they say they have eaten so many sticks. In like manner they speak of drinking knowledge. (Thomson.)

ORACLES AGAINST JERUSALEM AND JUDAH.

(Ezek. iv. 1–xii. 20.)

The Branch to the Nose.

"In the vision shown to Ezekiel at Jerusalem of the five-and-twenty men who 'worshipped the men towards

the East,' the prophet was told that they committed 'abominations' there, 'for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose'" (Ezek. viii. 17). In reference to this obscure verse E. J. Clifton, in his *Bible Illustrations from Persia of To-day*, records the following:

"In the Zoroastrian sacrifice three plants are employed, namely, the 'hom' plant, the pomegranate, and another called the 'barsom,' the twigs or sprays of which are all tied together in a bundle at a certain point in the sacrifice. This has been supposed by some to correspond in some way to the straw which, in the Soma Sacrifice of Vedic worship, was strewn as a seat for the divinities. In Persia, at Yezd, the tamarisk-bush is used to form the bundle mentioned. Then, most likely in the identical way in which it was done by the worshippers in the days of the Parsee prophet himself, the bundle is bound round with a narrow strip of bark taken from the mulberry-tree. Sometimes, as in India, brass rods are substituted for the twigs, but at Yezd this happens only when, in the winter season, there is an impossibility of obtaining the necessary branches. The tamarisk-bush from which the sprays are cut by the 'Dastur,' or high priest, stands from twelve to fifteen feet in height, and its colour is a light green. The twigs chosen by the priest are slender and delicate, and are covered with leaves fibrous and downy in structure.

"It seems extremely probable that the branches they 'put to their nose,' and which merited Ezekiel's de-

nunciation, were those mentioned above, and the custom as follows :

"During the sacrifice mentioned, at one particular point the priest dips his bundle of twigs into a basin of prepared liquid. He then sprinkles the altar, his fellow priests, and finally, 'lo, he puts the branch to his nose.'"

NOTE.

Ezek. 8^{14} "*there sat the women weeping for Tammuz.*"—The name Tammuz signifies the "son of life." He was a Babylonian deity associated with sun-worship, and is identical with the Greek Adonis. The story of the death of Tammuz is said to be a solar myth, having reference to the death of the sun-god. Sometimes the death is said to be that which he undergoes each night, sometimes that which he undergoes when he expires before the touch of winter, and sometimes the death is that of the lusty, life-giving vernal god, who perishes along with all life on earth amidst the summer fires which he himself has kindled. The town of Gebal or Byblos, 8 miles north of Beirut, was the great seat of the Adonis worship in Phœnicia." (W. R. Smith.)

DENUNCIATIONS AGAINST FALSE PROPHETS.

(Ezek. xii. 21–xiv. 23.)

Hebrew Prophets.

The main prophetic period in Hebrew history may be said to have extended from the eighth to the fourth century B.C., *i.e.* from the time of Amos and Hosea to shortly after the Restoration. But a long preparatory

process was exerted prior to Amos, and for many centuries the offices of prophet and priest were indistinct, and the functions of a prophet undecided. The following periods therefore are now classified: (*a*) Sporadic manifestations before the time of Samuel; (*b*) the rise and development of the prophetic institution from Samuel to Amos; and (*c*) the period of the prophetical writings incorporated in the O.T. canon.

1. *Early Manifestations.*

In Gen. 20^{7} Abraham is called a prophet; in Ps. 105^{15} the name is given to the patriarchs generally; in Exod. 7^{1} Aaron is described as a prophet to Moses; in Judg. 4^{4} Deborah is pronounced to have prophetic functions. At the time of the Midianite oppression detailed in Judges an anonymous prophet was sent to Israel (6^{8}), and in 1 Sam. 2^{27} a "man of God" came to Eli to denounce the wickedness of his family. Nothing precise can be stated concerning the call of such prophets to act as the mouthpieces of Yahweh. The idea was widely prevalent in ancient times that a certain order of men was favoured with special intercourse with the Deity, and entrusted with special messages from Him. Doubtless such manifestations of the Divine will were associated with pagan rites, and the description of witchcraft and magic in Deut. 18^{10-14} shows how long these ideas lasted even in a time of clearer moral and spiritual life. When the true significance of prophecy came to be understood, the contrast

between it and the methods of heathen divination were very marked; but this stage could have been arrived at only very gradually. (See arts. MAGIC AND WITCHCRAFT and INQUIRING OF THE LORD, vol. i. pp. 298–306.)

2. *From Samuel to Amos.*

A new era began with Samuel, an era crystallized in Acts 3^{24}, where Peter speaks of "all the prophets from Samuel and them that followed after." Samuel is credited with having organized the prophetic ministry by creating schools or colleges where training could be obtained. Such institutions were certainly established at Ramah, at Naioth, at Bethel, at Jericho, and at Gilgal, and the preservation of many of the religious records of the past is attributed to these colleges. That some of the prophets from these schools bore a certain resemblance to the travelling dervishes of to-day is evident from 1 Sam. 10^{5-13}. Probably the modern dervish is but a degenerate descendant of these wandering prophetic bands. Their methods appear to have been similar. Music, *e.g.*, was relied upon for assisting in the production of a religious ecstasy. In 2 Kings 3^{15} Elisha asks that a minstrel may be brought: "And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him"; while the behaviour of the prophet in the presence of Jehu in 2 Kings 9^{11} led the king to speak of him as a "mad fellow." This would not necessarily be an epithet of contumely. Madness in the East is not despised or

looked upon with horror as with us. On the contrary, a lunatic is regarded often as a holy person whose mind is temporarily (or permanently) in communion with the Deity in Paradise, and whose actions accordingly are not dictated by reason.

The prophets of this period assumed an important rôle in the daily life of the people. Samuel, *e.g.*, was asked by Saul's servant how to find the lost asses of his master. Often they were asked advice concerning illness, particularly with regard to its probable issue. Elisha was constantly sought for in times of private and domestic need. In their own private life they married, had families, and dressed and ate like other men. Asceticism was a much later habit.

3. *The Prophetical Writers.*

A new era arose when the prophets began to write. The prophetic function now became political rather than private, and the work of the inspired writers national rather than individual. These men were definitely associated with world events. Thus six prophets, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah, and Nahum, belonged to the Assyrian period. As prophets of the Chaldean period there were Jeremiah, Habakkuk, and Ezekiel. Deutero-Isaiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi belonged to the Restoration period, while the dates of Joel, Jonah, Obadiah, and Deutero-Zechariah are unknown, though they are believed to be post-Exilic. The latest prophetic book, "Daniel," was not

reckoned by the Jews to be among the prophecies but in the "Writings," and as literature it is apocalyptic rather than prophetic. After that, two centuries elapsed before John the Baptist, "the last prophet under the old covenant and the forerunner of the new," came in the spirit and power of Elijah to announce the advent of the Messiah.

In the Book of Jeremiah there is given a full account of the way in which Jeremiah's utterances were recorded by his faithful secretary Baruch, and it is probable that a similar process was usual in the case of other of the literary prophets. That the work of collecting the prophetic utterances was not always carefully done is clear from the state of the text in some of the books. "But the God who inspired His servant first to see and then to speak, did in certain cases inspire him also to write, and thus words which were intended in the first instance for rebellious Israel or disconsolate Judah have proved of perennial significance in the religious education of the world." Moral teaching was brought to bear upon national life, and the prophet represented the highest civic consciousness. For a time the political influence of the prophets was great. Isaiah and Micah, Amos, and Hosea, illustrate the way in which the prophets intervened in questions of war and alliances—the foreign policy of their day. Sometimes they urged bold defiance of enemies, as in the invasion of Sennacherib (2 Kings 19); sometimes they advocated a policy of neutrality, as between Egypt and Assyria (Is. 30); while at other times, as in the case of

Jeremiah, submission to a foreign power was recommended.

"As to the predictive element in prophecy, it may be discerned on every page, but it is not of the 'fortune-telling' order. Most of the predictions refer to national events, in Israel or surrounding nations. Some of these enter into detail, as in the overthrow of Ahab at Ramoth-gilead foretold by Micaiah (1 Kings 22^{34}), and the failure of Sennacherib's expedition announced by Isaiah. Others threaten in a general way that punishment will follow disobedience, this strain becoming ever sterner and more pronounced as time advanced. These dark passages were fulfilled, in the case of the Northern Kingdom, in the eighth century B.C.; and afterwards, when Judah refused to take the warning, her calamities culminated in the capture and overthrow of Jerusalem.

"The prophets, however, are able to take a wider outlook; their penetrating gaze extends to the more distant future. This feature is so closely blended with the last, that it is sometimes hard to distinguish between the two. It is the habit of the prophets to pass immediately and without warning from the nearer to the further horizon, and the question perpetually recurs—Of whom, of what period, speaketh the prophet this? That their power of foresight was akin to the moral insight which other exceptionally gifted persons have possessed, enabling them within limits to forecast the future, may be admitted. But no parallel has been found in any other nation to the phenomena of Hebrew

prophecy, especially in the continuous succession of men carrying on the same remarkable work for generations. Many critics seek to eliminate the element of the supernatural from the prophecy. But, whilst it may be granted that many prophecies were not fulfilled because they were given with a condition stated or implied, and that the poetical language of many others never was literally fulfilled, or intended to be so, there remain a considerable number of national predictions which were fulfilled in a very remarkable manner, especially when we bear in mind that they ran directly counter to the prejudices of the times and were sometimes uttered at the risk of very life to the daring messenger himself." (Davison.)

SYMBOLS OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

(Ezek. xv. 1–xvii. 21.)

Dyeing, Weaving, and Embroidery.

These arts have been particularly developed in the East, and the poorest peasants exhibit richly executed embroideries upon their persons and display a variety of colour and texture that has always elicited Western admiration. In lands where the sun shines for the greater part of each year there is a tendency to produce colour effects which are almost forbidden under the wet and dull skies of more northern countries, and the gay motley of an Eastern crowd which seems so har-

monious with their own surroundings would seem strangely out of place in our own islands, though colour combinations which were regarded as impossible a few years ago in civilized lands are now seen with frequency, and mark, for once, the influence of the East over the West.

The art of dyeing was one in which the inhabitants of Palestine excelled, and a few of their colours were world famous. Such was the costly Tyrian purple manufactured from the creamy fluid secreted by the gland of a shell-fish known to science as the "murex trunculus," which was found in great quantities on the Phœnician coast. Hence Tyre became the chief seat of the manufacture of that purple cloth worn almost exclusively by kings and nobles (Ezek. $27^{7.\ 16}$). Thus it was as "King of the Jews" that our Lord was derisively robed in purple (Mk. 15^{17}, Jn. 19^{2}).

Crimson and scarlet were also colours having special significance. These dyes were derived from the cochineal or "scarlet worm," an insect which attaches itself to the leaves and twigs of the "quercus coccifera," a species of oak tree. Scarlet-coloured garments were distinctive of wealth and prosperity (2 Sam. 1^{24}, Prov. 31^{21}), and scarlet was also one of the ecclesiastical colours. Thus in the Priest's Code (Exod. 25ff.), "violet" (A.V. "blue"), "purple," and "scarlet" are used—and always in this order—to denote the fine linen thread used in weaving the high priest's robes and the various hangings for the Tabernacle.

Weaving is described in the Talmud as "the lowest

of crafts" and, as a class, weavers were held in disrepute by the mass of the people. Probably for this reason they found it necessary to form themselves into a guild so that they might enjoy mutual protection. On the other hand, in the description of a virtuous woman in Prov. $31^{13.\ 22.\ 24}$ her skill and diligence in weaving are prominently commended. To-day in the East the women are continually seen engaged in weaving and in the various processes preparatory thereto. The simplest method is that adopted by the Bedawîn women, which is thus described by Mackie: "A Bedawîn woman stuffs a bunch of goat hair under her arm, and drawing out a tuft of it ties it to a stone. She spins it round and gradually adds more hair. She thus gets a roughly uniform thread, the twisted strand that is woven into haircloth for the nose-bags of donkeys, horses, and camels, sacks for holding grain and flour; and the lengths that are over-edged and joined together to make the black 'houses of hair'—the Bedawîn tents. This is the sackcloth of the Bible, which was worn as a mark of penitence or grief, and was the standard simile for anything intensely black. Somewhat softer and more flexible is the cloth of CAMEL-HAIR; the softest and most valuable being that of sheep's wool. As sheep and goats are black and white, and camels buff-coloured or dark brown, decoration is introduced in the form of broad alternate stripes of light and dark colour. Through all Oriental weaving we find these two features, the suspended stone-weight and the love of striped ornamentation."

There were three forms of hand loom used by the ancients, of which the oldest was the horizontal loom, which is believed to go back as far as the 12th Egyptian dynasty. This is the type referred to in the incident of Samson and Delilah (Judg. $16^{13.\ 14}$), and is a kind still in use in the East. A second variety was an upright loom of the form pictured in Greek representations of Penelope. It consisted of two uprights joined at the top by a cross-piece from which depended the threads of the warp, kept taut by stone weights tied to their lower end. The third variety was an upright loom having a second cross-beam at the foot of the uprights so that the web could be begun at either the bottom or the top of the loom.

The references to weaving in the O.T. are numerous and, unless the craft is understood, perplexing. In the process of weaving there are three essential movements, which may be briefly explained. First there is the division of the warp or vertical threads, which run the length of the material, into sets of odd and even so that the weft or horizontal threads can be passed across. This division is effected by looping the threads over two leash rods or shafts which are alternately raised and lowered. With a heavy warp these shafts are of considerable size, and it is with one of these that Goliath's spear is compared (1 Sam. 17^{7}, 2 Sam. 21^{19}). The second primary movement is the passing of the weft through the strands of the warp, which is done by means of a shuttle on which the yarn is wound. The third movement consists in striking the weft with a wooden

rod or mallet so as to bring it to a uniform tightness. In the weaving of such textiles as carpets this is a very arduous performance.

"The art of embroidery was described by the Romans as 'painting with a needle.' It was an invention of the Babylonians, from whom it passed, through the medium of the Phyrgians, to the Greeks and the other nations of the West. Mummy cloths are still preserved showing that the art was practised also in Egypt. No actual specimens of Babylonian embroidery have survived, but the sculptures of Assyrian palaces, notably a sculptured figure of Ashurnazirpal, show the royal robes ornamented with borders of the most elaborate embroidery.

"If, as is generally believed, the Priests' Code was compiled in Babylonia, we may trace the influence of the latter in the embroideries introduced into the Tabernacle screens and elsewhere. In the passages in question the work of 'the embroiderer' (*roqem*) is distinguished from, and mentioned after, the work of 'the cunning workman' (*choseb*, lit. 'designer'; in Phœnician, 'weaver'), who appears to have woven his designs into the fabric after the manner of tapestry. The materials used by both artists were the same, linen thread dyed 'blue, purple, and scarlet,' and fine gold thread, the preparation of which is described in Exod. 39^3." (Kennedy.)

NOTE.

Ezek. 17^3 "*A great eagle . . . came unto Lebanon.*"—Nebuchadrezzar. The rest of the imagery in verses 4–10 refers

to the deportation of Jehoiachin and the princes, and the enthronement of Zedekiah under the suzerainty of Babylon. But Zedekiah leaned toward Egypt (v.[7]) and so incurred the second Chaldean invasion. (See 2 Kings 24[8]–25[7]; see also Ezek. 17[11-21].)

A DISQUISITION UPON INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY.

(Ezek. xviii.)

The following articles bear upon this chapter:

Hebrew Wisdom, p. 129.
The Book of Ezekiel, p. 230.

EXHORTATIONS AND THE DIRGE OVER THE PRINCES OF JUDAH.

(Ezek. xix.)

The following articles bear upon this section:

The Book of Ezekiel, p. 230.
Lions, p. 263.
Vineyards, p. 27.
Nebuchadrezzar, p. 219.
The Life of Jeremiah, p. 204.

NOTE.

Ezek. 19[1-9] "*The elegy of the lions.*"—The mother lioness represents Judah. The first young lion (v.[3]) is Jehoahaz, son of Josiah, who was deported to Egypt by Pharaoh-necho (see 2 Kings 23[31-35]). He died in Egypt. The second young lion is Jehoiachin who was carried to Babylon. He was then only eighteen years of age. (See 2 Kings 24[8-15].)

PROPHECIES OF DISASTER.

(Ezek. xx. 1–xxviii. 26.)

Ancient Ships.

The great navigators of ancient Syria were the Phœnicians. Unlike the Hebrews, who had practically no seaboard and were therefore agricultural rather than maritime, the Phœnicians were compelled by the character of their country—a narrow strip of coastland with lofty mountains behind it—to seek their fortunes upon the sea. They made their first timid journeys along the coast in frail boats hollowed out from the trunks of the cedars. From this rude beginning they gradually improved the construction of their vessels until they were able to voyage to remote lands. For their trade with the distant Tarshish (Tartessus in Spain) they used large, strong vessels, and hence the name "ships of Tarshish" came later to be used, in a wider sense, for all large, sea-going vessels, exactly as our "East Indiaman" denoted a certain type of ship, not only one engaged in the India trade.

Representations of various Phœnician ships of a late date have come down to us from the Assyrian sculptures. These vessels are of the class known as biremes, that is, with two tiers of rowers. They stand high out of the water, armed at the prow with a metal ram, and having a curved stern ending in a point above the upper deck. On this deck there are the figures of warriors with long spears in their hands. The number of rowers varies in

the sculptures, but generally there appear to be eight on a side. Along the sides of the upper deck are hung the shields of the warriors, thus illustrating the passage in Ezek. 27^{11}: "The men of Arvad with thine army were upon thy walls round about, and the Gammadim were in thy towers: they hanged their shields upon thy walls round about." In some cases the ships have a mast and sail, giving them something of the appearance of a Chinese junk; in others they are propelled by rowers alone.

With the Egyptians navigation was confined in the main to the Nile. Their earliest form of boat was that of a light skiff made of papyrus reed, which was pushed through the water by means of poles. Larger boats of wood were then constructed, and in these the oars were placed in rowlocks. The rudder had not yet made its appearance, the steering being done by means of an oar at the stern of the craft.

At a later date the Egyptian boats were provided with a "rectangular square-sail which was probably made of papyrus matting." "The mast is very curious, for as one piece of wood was not strong enough alone, the Egyptians used two comparatively slender masts bound together at the top. A strong rope went from the top of the mast to the bow, and another to the stern—these correspond to our *shrouds*, *i.e.* the ropes which keep the mast in place. In addition, six to twelve thinner shrouds were fastened from the upper part of the mast to the back part of the boat.

"The yard-arm rested on the point of the mast; the

sailors were able to turn it to the right or left by two ropes which passed backwards from the ends of the yard. The sail hung down to the edge of the boat, and was provided, in some cases at any rate, with a second yard below; it was of considerable size in comparison with the size of the boat. Thus a boat of perhaps 52 feet in length, with oars 10 feet and steering-oars 16 feet long, would have a mast of 33 feet and a yard of 20 feet, so that the sail would contain from 600 to 700 square feet of canvas. When the wind dropped and the sail was lowered in order to row, the yard was taken off and the mast taken down; the sail was then wrapped round both, and the whole laid on the top of the cabin or hung on forked posts." [1]

In the new Empire a great advance was made in the art of shipbuilding. The vessels were vastly increased in size; the width of the sail became double its height; the steering was no longer done with an oar but by means of a large rudder; at the prow there was a wooden erection to serve as a protection for the pilot "who stands in the bows, and does not let his voice be wanting."

The cabin of a wealthy owner was furnished and decorated in the most lavish fashion. It had all the appearance of a house, with a roof and a pillared entrance. The sides of his vessel were brightly painted, the high curved stern ended in a lotus flower ornamentation, and the rudder "resembled a bouquet of flowers."

There is an early reference in the Old Testament to

[1] Erman, *Life in Ancient Egypt*, p. 481f.

the tribes of Dan and Asher which seems to indicate that they had become seafarers to some extent.

> "And Dan, why did he remain in ships ?
> Asher sat still at the haven of the sea,
> And abode by his creeks" (Judg. 5^{17})."

Zebulun also is described at a later date as a "haven of ships" and (along with Issachar) as obtaining wealth from the sea. But it is not till the time of Solomon that we hear of the Israelites engaging to any extent in maritime enterprise. Solomon had a "navy" of ships, constructed largely, no doubt, by the Phœnicians and also navigated by them. These ships were stationed at Ezion-geber on the Red Sea, and traded with Ophir in south-east Arabia. Jehoshaphat also had "ships of Tarshish," with which he attempted to carry on his predecessor's profitable commerce with Ophir, but, in the concise language of the historian, "they went not; for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber" (1 Kings 22^{48}).

NOTE.

According to Schaff, the description of a ship in Ezek. 27 is really an allegory picturing the ancient Tabernacle and Temple which Babylon had profaned. "For the ship 'Tyre'" he says, "in building, manning, and lading, was surely one of the strangest vessels that ever ploughed the seas. The planks of the Tabernacle, but cut from wood of the Temple, made its hull; the timber of the Temple, its mast; the pillars of the Tabernacle, but of wood of the tree under which Joshua set up his stone, its oars; the veil, its sail; the screen, its awning; its standard, perhaps that of the tribe of Levi; the royal throne, its helmsman's seat. Although officered and manned by the best men of the chief cities of Phœnicia, and defended by the sturdiest of the fighters of Arabia, its cargo was made up of the metals of tabernacle, temple, and royal guard; the sacred

vessels; the captive maidens and the beasts of burden set aside for the priests; the cavalry and commissary equipment of Solomon; the ivory of the throne; the jewels of the high priest's breastplate and of his shoulder buckles; the shewbread and anointing oil; the drink-offering; the tent-covering of the tabernacle; the king's weapons and armour; the sacred incense; the burnt-offering, the meal-offering, and the sin-offering; the gold of the breastplate and the mitre-plate; and the robes of the high priest, packed in a chest that recalled the ark of the Covenant, which the Babylonians had destroyed, and the sacred treasure, which they were holding in their treasure-house. A strange medley if read as a real ship's manifest; but if read as its writer intended, a memorable record of the desire of a people for retribution."

A PROPHECY AGAINST EGYPT.

(Ezek. xxix.–xxxii.)

Ethiopia.

The traveller who makes his way up the Nile Valley to Assouan has reached the northernmost point of the ancient land of Ethiopia, which corresponded roughly to the modern Nubia. From Assouan (the Syene of Ezek. 29[10]), at the foot of the first cataract, Ethiopia extended southwards to the modern Khartoum, above the sixth cataract, a stretch of about 1000 miles of river. To this land of valley and desert, inhabited by a scanty and barbarous population, the Egyptians gave the name of Kosh, from which the Hebrew Cush was derived. With the exception of the passages in Genesis the A.V. renders it Ethiopia.

The early history of Ethiopia is the story of the gradual absorption of the country by Egypt. In the

18th dynasty it had become an Egyptian province, governed by a viceroy and paying tribute "in negroes, oxen, gold, ivory, rare beads, hides, and household utensils." Under Egypt the prosperity of the country was greatly increased, and, as one would expect, the Egyptian rulers developed the towns of their new province, and erected temples, such as the sun-temple of Abu Simbel, excavated from the cliffs above the river, and the splendid temple of Soleb, built by Amenhotep III. With the decline of Egypt in the twelfth century B.C. the Ethiopians began to reassert themselves and make efforts towards gaining their independence. Soon they were able to free themselves from Egyptian influence, and to found a state having its capital in Napata, at the foot of Jebel Barkal, "the sacred mountain." By the eighth century B.C. they found themselves strong enough to reverse the process that had placed them under the heel of Egypt, and to begin the conquest of that country in their turn, in which they were finally successful. An Ethiopian dynasty, the 25th, occupied the throne of the Pharaohs for a period of fifty years. The last of these was Tahraku (the Tirhakah of 2 Kings 19^9 and Is. 37^9), who, unfortunately for himself and his dynasty, came into conflict with the Assyrians; and he and his successor, Tandamane, were driven by them into Ethiopia again. When we read the denunciations of Ethiopia in the writings of Isaiah, it must be remembered that, in his day, Ethiopia was the paramount influence in Egypt and the Nile Valley.

Driven from the Delta, the Ethiopians returned to their capital at Napata, which Breasted conjectures to have been the Biblical Noph. From about the third century B.C. they seem to have transferred the seat of government farther south to Meroë, but Napata remained the centre of religious worship, the worship of the national god Ammon. The expedition of the Persian king Cambyses to this country met with disaster, but during the reign of one of the Candaces, queens of Ethiopia, the land was invaded in 24 B.C. by the Romans, and Napata was sacked. The kingdom, however, seems still to have retained its independence.

Isaiah, in an imaginative description of Ethiopia, speaks of it as "the land of the rustling of wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia: that sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of papyrus upon the waters (saying), Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation tall and smooth, to a people terrible from their beginning onward; a nation that meteth out and treadeth down, whose land the rivers divide" (Is. 18^{1-2}). The phrase "the land of the rustling of wings" is taken by Dr. Skinner to refer to "the booming swarms of insects which abound in the Nile-lands. There may even be a special allusion to the dreaded tsetse fly, whose name among the Gallas (zalzalja) closely resembles the Hebrew word here used." The "vessels of papyrus" are the light skiffs particularly suited for navigation in the difficult waters of the Upper Nile, since they can easily be carried where cataracts occur. It will be noted that the ambassadors are described as "tall and smooth."

The latter word is literally "polished," and refers to their dark complexions. Elsewhere Isaiah calls them "men of stature," and Herodotus describes them as "the tallest and handsomest of all men." The nation has not in this point changed greatly in the centuries. The Nubian of the Soudan is still of fine physique and handsome. The "merchandise of Ethiopia" (Is. 45^{14}) consisted mainly of gold, ebony, frankincense, ivory, and jewels. The "topaz of Ethiopia" is mentioned among other jewels in the poem on Wisdom in Job (28^{19}).

The following article bears upon the verse specified:

Ezek. 32^{26} The Scythians, p. 304.

PROPHECIES OF RESTORATION.

(Ezek. xxxiii.–xxxix.)

The following articles bear upon this section:

Jerusalem, p. 70.
Hebrew Houses and Furniture, p. 38.
The Book of Ezekiel, p. 230.
The Climate of Palestine, p. 31.
The Hebrew Calendar, p. 100.

EZEKIEL'S VISION OF THE IDEAL THEOCRACY.

(Ezek. xl.–xlviii.)

The Prophet Ezekiel.

Ezekiel, the son of Buzi, was of a priestly family of the order of the descendants of Zadok. He was carried

into captivity with King Jehoiachin after the first capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadrezzar in 597 B.C. In Babylonia he lived at Tell Abib on the banks of the Chebar, one of the tributaries of the Euphrates, and there he resided with his wife until her death, which occurred at the time of the final siege of Jerusalem, a death hastened by the accumulated sorrows of that dark time, and definitely caused by the last sad news which came to her from the old Palestinian home (Ezek. 24^{15-18}). Ezekiel was called to the prophetic office in the fifth year of the Captivity, when he was about thirty years of age. The call was preceded by an impressive vision of the Divine Glory, received, apparently, when he was in a state of trance or ecstasy. The frequency with which he alludes to his people as "the rebellious house" would appear to show that at first his message had met with contemptuous rejection, and it would be inferred also that he never fully achieved the results he desired. Yet there was something in his speech which pleased the ears of his fellow-captives and brought them to his house. Probably his character commanded attention, for he was distinguished by moral courage, and he ever acted as "a man under authority." Of his later life nothing is known. A legend is told which states that he met the Greek philosopher Pythagoras and gave him instruction, and another relates that he was martyred. There is every reason to believe that he died in exile. His reputed grave, a few days' journey from Baghdad, was a pilgrim resort of the mediæval Jews.

Ezekiel's teaching stands in natural sequence to that of Jeremiah. The older prophet had suffered the hatred of his fellow-countrymen by his bold proclamation of the destruction of their capital and of the approaching national humiliation; and for one who had thus borne the brunt of obloquy and the charge of anti-patriotism any scheme of reconstruction or restoration was obviously impossible. "What Jeremiah had accomplished was the task of dispelling the illusions of the past and setting up in their place loftier and more permanent ideals. To this inheritance Ezekiel succeeded. He continued what Jeremiah had begun, but in a different spirit and under altered and more favourable conditions." (Whitehouse.)

Not that Ezekiel was spared his share of public disfavour. The misfortunes which had fallen to the lot of Judah tended to estrange the people from Yahweh, and it seemed to the perplexed nation that the way of the Lord was the wrong way. Especially did they fail to understand the reason of their suffering so soon after the reforms of good King Josiah, and they had therefore answered the warnings of Jeremiah with specious arguments. "When our fathers worshipped Baal and the stars," they said, "things went well with us, but since Josiah served the Lord only, things have gone ill," and in opposition to such views Ezekiel's task was to prove that their punishment was merited and the Divine justice still perfect.

The concluding chapters of the Book of Ezekiel contain the prophet's scheme for the restoration of

Israel, not as a nation but as an ecclesiastical system, a scheme which exercised a profound influence over the future Judaism. The ideas embodied in this new organization are presented in the form of a vision. In this dream Ezekiel is conducted by an Angel through the new Jerusalem with its restored Temple, particulars of which are minutely detailed, and he is shown a new Theocracy, where God is to rule over Church and State as in the old Mosaic days, the centre of government being the Temple, just as the Tabernacle had been the rallying point of the ancient tribes. Crime is to be unknown in this ideal society, nor will the State require to provide in any way for the external welfare of the people, since Yahweh will give bountifully to all in want. Nor will any measures be needed for the security of the country from foreign invasion, for this idyllic kingdom will be one of everlasting peace; while if a heathen nation dare to disturb this serenity Yahweh will Himself appear to burn up the weapons of the enemy (Chaps. 38–39). There will be no king over this new State, for the political is to give place to the ecclesiastical; all revenues will accrue to the Temple, and nobles as well as common people will pay tithes out of the land, which they will cultivate themselves like the Israelites of old. Such was Ezekiel's idea of the new Jerusalem, and its name was to be "The Lord is there."

THE STORY OF DANIEL AND HIS THREE COMPANIONS.

(Dan. i.–vi.)

The Book of Daniel.

The Book is divisible into two parts: (I) chaps. 1–6, consisting of a series of narratives descriptive of the experiences of Daniel and his friends in the reigns of Nebuchadrezzar (chaps. 1–4), Belshazzar (chap. 5), and Darius (chap. 6); and (II) chaps. 7–12, a series of visions purporting to have been seen by Daniel during the reigns of Belshazzar (chaps. 7, 8), Darius (chap. 9), and Cyrus (chaps. 10–12).

It used to be assumed that the Book of Daniel was written by Daniel himself, but this is not now considered a tenable theory. Modern opinion places the date of its production between 168 and 165 B.C., *i.e.* during the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, and sees in the book an attempt to encourage the godly Jews during this period of trial. At a moment when the national existence was imperilled the author came forward with words of consolation and hope, assuring his readers that in less than three and a half years their trials would be past. "Such a prediction," says Canon Driver, "is exactly on a footing with those of the earlier prophets—of Isaiah, for instance, who says (8^4) that before a child just born can cry Father and Mother, Damascus will be taken by the king of Assyria; who declares (16^{14} 21^{16}) that within three years the

glory of Moab, and within one year the glory of Kedar, will both be humbled; and who announces (29^{1-5}) Jerusalem's deliverance, within a year, from the siege and distress which he sees impending; or of the great prophet of the Exile, who, as Cyrus is advancing on his career of conquest (Is. $41^{2.\ 3.\ 25}$), bids his people not be in alarm (41^{8-11} etc.), the successes of Cyrus are part of God's providential plan ($41^{2.\ 4.\ 25}$) and will issue in the deliverance of Israel from exile ($44^{28}.\ 45^{4.\ 13}$)."

Much of the Book of Daniel is in the form of an apocalypse. The word means "disclosure" or "revelation," and this form of writing is first found in the post-Exilic prophecies of the O.T. It consists essentially of a development and adaptation of the ideas and promises of the older prophets designed with the special object of giving encouragement in time of distress. Such disclosures were usually placed in the mouth of some famous and pious man of old—an Enoch, a Moses, a Baruch, an Ezra—and the future was unrolled with symbolic imagery from the standpoint of the assumed writer. The seer, who is represented as the author of the book, sometimes beholds these things himself in a vision or dream, sometimes he holds communication with an angel, who acts as an interpreter. In the Septuagint the Book of Daniel also includes the three Apocryphal writings, "The Song of the Three Holy Children," 'The History of Susanna," and "The History of the Destruction of Bel and the Dragon."

The turbulent history of Palestine from the time of the fall of Jerusalem to the age of the Maccabees is the

key to the Book of Daniel. The book opens in the third year of King Jehoiakim (605 B.C.), when, it is said, Daniel and his companions were carried captive to Babylon, then ruled by the great Nebuchadrezzar (see art. p. 219). This monarch was succeeded by his son Amel-marduk (called "Evil-merodach" in 2 Kings 25^{27}). This youth reigned only two years, when he was assassinated by his brother-in-law Neriglissar, who usurped the throne, holding it for four years. He was succeeded by his youthful son, but after nine months' rule he was "beaten to death" by his friends, who placed one of their own number on the throne, Nabonidus. This man was no relation to his predecessors, nor a Chaldean like Nebuchadrezzar, but a native Babylonian. He was the last native king of Babylon, and was still on the throne when the city was taken by Cyrus 538 B.C. Belshazzar (Dan. 5) was the son of Nabonidus. It is said that the ease with which the transference of power from this king to Cyrus was effected was largely due to the unpopularity Nabonidus had acquired through his neglect of public duties and his removal of the images of local deities from their country shrines to the capital.

Babylon remained under the Persians for two centuries (538–333 B.C.), when the Persian rule was brought to its close by the conquests of Alexander the Great. The story of the Jewish restoration, which occurred during the Persian period, is told in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah (see art. p. 85).

It was the ambition of Alexander to build up a world-

wide empire which should be permeated by Greek culture, and though he died before his aims could be realized, the impulses which he set in motion continued to operate, and Palestine came under definite Hellenic influence. Had that influence been able to diffuse itself undisturbed, the history and development of the Middle East would have been different; but Palestine, unfortunately for the Jews, became the battleground of conflicting Empires, and the story of the next century or so was one of continuous bloodshed, the little country of Judah being buffeted about between the Syrian and Egyptian Greeks. On the whole, except at brief intervals, Palestine remained subject to Egypt until 198 B.C., when Antiochus the Great (Syria) defeated Ptolemy Epiphanes (Egypt) at the foot of Hermon. After that battle it passed permanently into the power of Syria. The suffering of the Jews during these struggles was very terrible, for whichever side prevailed for a time, their country was burdened by the presence in it of an invading army, and many of the people were killed, captured, or lost all in flight. In the end the Jews gave their support to Antiochus, and in return for their assistance were granted certain religious privileges.

"Antiochus, who afterwards assumed the title Epiphanes, is, in the later chapters of the Book of Daniel, the principal figure. He was a strange character —a man of ability, though with a taint of folly and madness in his veins. On the one hand he was ambitious, arbitrary, and determined. He laid deep designs, and

had a remarkable power of concealing them. During the years spent by him as hostage at Rome, he was well received, and moved in the best circles of Roman society; the consequence was that he contracted a taste for Western habits and ideals, and also for Western luxuries. He was munificent, and even lavish; he showed, in Livy's words, a truly 'regal mind' in the gifts made by him to Greek cities and temples; he also greatly improved his capital, Antioch; he added a new quarter to it; he adorned it with numerous copies of the principal masterpieces of Greek sculpture; he erected magnificent temples both in Antioch and in its suburb Daphne; and he even introduced gladiatorial shows (Livy 41^{20}). But he courted popularity to an excessive degree. Polybius, in a well-known passage, describes how, putting off his royal robes, he would wander alone through the streets of Antioch, now discussing questions of art in the goldsmiths' shops, now offering himself as a candidate for some public office, and entreating people to vote for him, while at other times he might be seen making unexpected presents to utter strangers, startling a party of boon-companions by rushing in upon them with a band of music, or bathing with the townspeople in the public bath. His behaviour was at times so undignified and extraordinary that men doubted even whether he were altogether sane, and instead of 'Epiphanes' he was called 'Epimanes' (Madcap). To the Jews, on account of the determined effort made by him to denationalize them and heathenize their religion, he appeared simply

as a persecuting tyrant and monster of iniquity; and though other features of his character are alluded to (Dan. 8^{23} $11^{21-30a.\ 39}$), it is chiefly this aspect of it which is delineated in the Book of Daniel ($7^{8.\ 21.\ 25}$ $8^{9-12.\ 23-25}$ $9^{26.\ 27}$ $11^{28.\ 30b.-38}$ $12^{7b.\ 11}$)." (Driver.)

The policy of this monarch towards the Jews was probably not the outcome of any active hostility to their religion, but was rather dictated by his dream of bringing every one under the influence of Greek culture. He therefore decided that all practices of the Jewish religion were to be prohibited under pain of death, the Temple of Jerusalem was to be transformed into a sanctuary of the Olympian Zeus, altars dedicated to Greek deities were to be set up throughout the country, and all Jews were required to sacrifice upon them. On the 15th of Chislev (December) 168 B.C. an "abomination of desolation" (*i.e.* a small heathen altar) was erected upon the altar of burnt-offering in the Temple, and on the 25th of the same month the first sacrifices were offered upon it. Books of the Law were burnt, and women who had their children circumcised were put to death. The story of this awful period of Jewish martyrdom is recounted in 1 Macc. (see Dan. 11^{31-33}). But the "little help" of Dan. 11^{34} appeared. Mattathias, a priest, when ordered by the king's commissioner to do sacrifice, refused, slaying both the officer and an apostate Jew who came forward to act in his stead. The flame of revolt spread, and though the brave Mattathias died (167 B.C.), his son Judas the Maccabee, a man of exceptional ability, assumed the

leadership of the patriotic party, whom he led to a temporary victory, Antiochus dying before the Jewish power was broken. Thus were secured the religious liberties of the Jews. The movement, it is believed, was greatly strengthened by the encouragement of the Book of Daniel, the publication of which is estimated to have occurred before the rededication of the Temple, which resulted upon the initial victories of Judas Maccabæus.

Lions.

Until comparatively recently lions were common in the Middle East, and in Palestine they had many a lair in the forests and reed brakes of the Jordan; and there is evidence that they were often seen at the time of the crusades. It was probably during the Greek and Roman periods that lions were almost extirpated from the Orient. The Arabs to-day state that they are sometimes found in Arabia; but it is doubtful if the assertion is true. At the same time a carcass is recorded as having been recently brought into Damascus.

Various places in the Holy Land derived their names from the lion, *e.g.*, Laish, a word signifying an old lion in the vigour of his strength; Lebaoth or Beth-lebaoth, the house of lionesses (Josh. 15^{32} 19^{6}); and Arieh in 2 Kings 15^{25}, this name denoting the animal in general. Altogether there are some 130 references to lions in the pages of Scripture, sufficient proof of the prevalence of the animal in Syria, while after Israel had been desolated by the Assyrians it is stated in 2 Kings $17^{25\text{-}26}$ that the

lions had so multiplied that they laid waste the towns and villages of Samaria.

Canon Tristram thus describes the mode of capturing a lion:

A pitfall was made, with spikes driven into the bottom; this was carefully covered over, and then the assembled population by loud cries and noises startled the lion from his lair, and drove him towards the pit; when impaled, he was dispatched by their spears. Sometimes he was driven into a sort of decoy of loose network, in which he became entangled and comparatively helpless. These modes of capture are alluded to by Ezekiel: "He was taken in their pit, and they brought him with chains (R.V. 'hooks') unto the land of Egypt. . . . The nations set against him . . . and they spread their net over him; he was taken in their pit" (19[4. 8]). It was a feat of valour on the part of Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, one of David's mighty men, that "he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow" (2 Sam. 23[20]), this being a single-handed achievement.

The Eastern monarchs were accustomed to keep lions in confinement; not, as among the Egyptians, tamed for the purpose of hunting, as is represented in their sculptures; or for the sake of the shows of the arena, and for public combats, as among the Romans; but for regal pomp and ostentation, though, as in the case of Daniel cast into the lions' den, they were also employed as instruments of despotic vengeance (Dan. 6).

THE VISIONS OF DANIEL.

(Dan. vii.–xii.)

The First Vision of Daniel.

This vision is described as occurring in the first year of Belshazzar. In it there appear four beasts emerging from an agitated sea, which is considered to be the Mediterranean. The first beast was like a lion with the wing of the griffon-vulture, so that it combined the character of the noblest of quadrupeds with the most majestic of birds—the indomitable strength of the lion, and the power of the vulture to soar securely in the sky, descry its prey from a great distance, and attack it unerringly. It denoted Nebuchadrezzar or his armies, the simile being the same as in Jer. $49^{19.\ 22}$ etc. In the vision, the wings of this creature are seen to be plucked, thereby depriving it of the power of flight and arresting its career of conquest. In this there appears to be an allusion to Nebuchadrezzar's madness, a temporary condition, since the beast thereafter was set upon its feet and granted intelligence (Dan. 7^{4}).

The second beast resembles a bear, a voracious animal living principally upon vegetables; but if pressed by hunger ready to attack both animals and man. In the O.T. it is spoken of as being, next to the lion, the most formidable beast of prey known in Palestine. In this vision it is regarded as symbolizing the kingdom of Media. Some commentators consider that the three ribs which this creature held in its mouth

(v.[5]) represent the kingdoms of Lydia, Babylonia, and Egypt. Others are of the opinion that the ribs simply typify the beast's voracity.

The third creature is a leopard with four wings and four heads. The leopard is a fierce carnivorous animal remarkable for the swiftness and agility of its attack. In Hab. 1[8], *e.g.*, the horses of the Chaldeans are described as "swifter than leopards." It is particularly dangerous to cattle, and specially noted for the patience with which it waits for its prey, on which it springs with deadly precision. Thus Hosea uses the simile "as a leopard will I watch by the way" (Hos. 13[7]). Thus the four wings on this beast's back indicate an increased agility, while the four heads appear to indicate that the nation which it symbolizes was to extend in every direction. This nation is interpreted as the Persian Empire.

The fourth beast is described only in words of horror, without likening it to any known form. It had ten horns. A horn is a very common O.T. figure for strength. Here it is assumed that the ten horns symbolize the ten successors of Alexander on the throne of Antioch. The little horn which came up out of these ten would then mean the kingdom of Antiochus Epiphanes. (See art. The Second Vision of Daniel, p. 267.)

Then follows a great celestial Assize, a judgment on the Gentile world powers. "The scene is majestically conceived. Thrones are set for the heavenly powers, the assessors of the judge; the Almighty Himself appears in the likeness of an aged man, seated on a

throne of flame; angels in countless myriads stand in attendance around Him; and the books recording the deeds of the Gentile rulers are opened. The four beasts are given over to destruction; while a figure in human form is brought before the Almighty in the clouds of heaven, and receives from Him an everlasting dominion." (Driver.)

The Second Vision of Daniel.

This vision is represented as appearing to Daniel in the third year of Belshazzar's reign, when he was in the palace at Shushan in the province of Elam (see art. Elam, p. 224), on the banks of the river Ulai. This river has been identified as the Assyrian U-La-a-a-, the waters of which Ashurbanipal states that he "coloured with blood like wool" on his first invasion of Elam.

In this vision a ram with two horns appears pushing towards the west, north, and south. The ram is an emblem of power and dominion, and its symbolism is explained in Dan. 8^{20} as representing the combined power of the Medes and Persians, the higher of the two horns being Persia, which was the stronger state. This ram is attacked by a he-goat, which shattered the two horns and caused four other horns to grow in their place. This he-goat represents the Empire of the Greeks, and its "great horn" (v.^{21}) the person of Alexander the Great, who crossed the Hellespont in the spring of 334 B.C., routing the Persian forces which had assembled to oppose his advance and marching

through Asia Minor. In 332 he reduced Tyre, traversed Palestine and conquered Egypt, founding in memory of the event the celebrated city of Alexandria. In 331 he crossed the Euphrates and dealt the final blow against the power of Persia. In 327 he advanced upon India, returning in 324 to Babylon, where he was greeted as the conqueror of Asia. There, seized by a sudden fever, he died after only eleven days' illness, at the early age of thirty-two. The dramatic collapse of Persia is pictured in Dan. 8^{7} and the tragic death of Alexander in Dan. 8^{8}. The four "notable horns" which replaced the single one typify the four kingdoms into which Alexander's Empire was divided, namely, Macedonia and Greece; Thrace and Bithynia; the Orient from Syria to the Indus; and Egypt. The "little horn" (v.^{9}) which grew out of one of these is the land of Israel, which fell to Antiochus Epiphanes 175–164 B.C. (See art. THE BOOK OF DANIEL, p. 257.) This man's assault upon the religious liberties of the Jews, his suspension of the Temple services for three years (1 Macc. 1), and his sacrilegious attacks upon the fabric of the Holy Place are pictured in Dan. 8^{10-14}.

THE THIRD VISION OF DANIEL; OR, THE PROPHECY OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS.

Canon Driver says of the numerous interpretations of the ninth chapter of Daniel that none is satisfactory, and that they can only be regarded as a resort of desperation!

The prophecy is stated as having come to Daniel in the first year of Darius the Mede, when the seventy years of desolation foretold by Jeremiah were drawing to a close. These seventy years are explained by the Angel Gabriel as seventy *weeks* of years, so that Jeremiah's prophecy, which seemed so far from fulfilment in the harassing days of Antiochus, was not a false one, but would be justified at the close of the 490 years.

The anointed Prince of verse 25 is considered to be Cyrus (cf. Is. 45[1]), who would rebuild Jerusalem, destroyed in Nebuchadrezzar's siege, while the " anointed one " of verse 26 is believed by the same authorities to be a reference to Onias III.

Onias III. was high priest until 175 B.C., when he was superseded by his brother Jason, who bought the office from Antiochus for the sum of 440 silver talents. Jason remained high priest for three years when he, in turn, was ousted by one Menelaus, who secured the post by the offer of a further 300 talents to the king. But the money was not paid and Menelaus was summoned to appear before Antiochus. On presenting himself at court, in obedience to the call, Menelaus found the king to be away in Cilicia, a courtier named Andronicus representing him. Hoping, therefore, to secure the favour of Andronicus, Menelaus presented him with some golden vessels which he had stolen from the Temple. Onias, hearing of this dishonest transaction, rebuked Menelaus sharply for the sacrilege, and Menelaus, angered by the rebuke, persuaded Andronicus to have

him assassinated. When Antiochus returned, however, Andronicus was executed at his command at the very spot where Onias had been murdered. The affair created a profound impression, which is reflected in the Second Book of Maccabees.

The Fourth Vision of Daniel.

Chaps. 10–12 describe a vision of Daniel in the third year of Cyrus by the banks of the Tigris. It followed upon a fast by Daniel of twenty-one days, and in it there appeared a Shining Being who told him that he had been sent in answer to his prayers, but that he had been prevented from reaching him before by the opposition of the "prince," *i.e.* the guardian angel, of Persia. With the help of Michael, the prince or guardian angel of the Jews, he had at length been able to start on his mission and present to Daniel a revelation of the future (10^{1-19}). After a few introductory words the revelation follows in 11^{2}–12^{4}. This vision is detailed very circumstantially. The three kings in Persia (11^{2}) who followed Cyrus were Cambyses (529–522 B.C.), Gaumata, who reigned for seven months, and Darius Hystaspis (522–485 B.C.). Some commentators, supposing that Gaumata's short reign would be disregarded, add the name of Xerxes (485–465 B.C.). This fits in with verse 4, where the third king is depicted as stirring up the forces of the world against Greece, for Xerxes attempted to subjugate Greece in 480 B.C., when he suffered a disastrous defeat at Salamis.

The "mighty king" of verse 3 would appear to be Alexander the Great, whose extraordinary career has been briefly outlined in the art. on THE SECOND VISION OF DANIEL, p. 267.

From 11^5 onwards the author confines himself to the kingdoms of the north and of the south, namely, that of the Seleucidæ in Syria and of the Ptolemies in Egypt. The "King of the south" (11^5) was Ptolemy, son of Lagus, a Macedonian and one of Alexander's most capable generals. Upon the death of Alexander he secured Egypt, which he ruled first as satrap and afterwards as king until his death in 285 B.C. The "one of his princes" of the same verse was Seleucus, a cavalry officer in Alexander's army. He was originally satrap of Babylonia, but, called to task for alleged irregularities, he took refuge with Ptolemy in Egypt and became one of his generals. Thereafter he induced Ptolemy to send him with a small force to recover Babylon, in which enterprise he was successful, regaining his satrapy and founding the era of the Seleucidæ, by which the Jews in later days reckoned. The fate of Palestine during this period has already been sketched in the art. THE BOOK OF DANIEL, p. 257.

The allusion in verse 6 is to events which happened about 249 B.C., when Ptolemy II. (Philadelphus) was on the throne of Egypt and Antiochus II. on that of Syria. Between these two there had long been war, and to terminate hostilities Ptolemy gave Antiochus his daughter, Berenice, on the condition that he should divorce his legitimate wife, Laodice, and that his two

sons should renounce all claims to the throne of Syria. By this means Ptolemy hoped to secure Syria as an Egyptian province; but he died two years later, and Antiochus promptly took back Laodice and divorced Berenice. Laodice, however, felt insecure and, not trusting her husband the second time, procured his death by poisoning. She then persuaded her son Seleucus to secure the throne for himself by murdering Berenice and her infant child ("she shall be given up," v.[6]). Her death was avenged by her brother Ptolemy III. (vv.[7, 8]), who attacked Syria, successfully carrying back with him to Egypt such immense spoil, including the deities captured by Cambyses 280 years before, that the Egyptians conferred upon him the title of "Benefactor." Thereafter occurred a succession of wars between the two kingdoms until the power of Egypt in Syria was finally broken (vv.[9-16]). This brings us to the reigns of Antiochus III. of Syria and Ptolemy V. (Epiphanes) of Egypt.

Antiochus III., being opposed by the Romans, now made overtures to Egypt and betrothed his daughter Cleopatra to Epiphanes (Dan. 11[17]), promising that she should receive as her dowry the provinces of Coele-Syria, Phœnicia, and Palestine. Antiochus' dreams of conquest in the west are reflected in verse 18. Already most of the cities in Asia Minor had submitted to him, and in 192 B.C. he invaded Greece, where he was defeated by the Romans in 191 at Thermopylæ and compelled to retire to Ephesus. Then the Romans determined to expel him from Asia, and inflicted upon him

a defeat so disastrous that his power crumbled ignominiously. He retired east of the Taurus to the "strongholds of his own land," where he was obliged to plunder the wealthy temple of Bel in Elymais (Persia) in order to pay the indemnity exacted by the Romans. This failure is referred to in verse 19.

Verses 21–45 reflect the reign of Antiochus IV. called the "contemptible" or the "despised" on account of his character. The leading events of his career have been given in the art. THE BOOK OF DANIEL, p. 257.

THE MINOR PROPHETS.

HOSEA.

The Prophecy of Hosea.

The prophecy of Hosea is the only one among those of the Northern Kingdom that has survived in writing, for though Amos prophesied to Israel, he himself was a native of Judah. It is, too, the longest of the so-called "Minor Prophets," and is placed first in the Canon, in both the Greek and Hebrew MSS., probably because of the occurrence in 1^2 of the phrase "The beginning of the word of the Lord."

Of Hosea himself nothing is known outside his book. His prophetic career extended from shortly before the fall of the house of Jeroboam II., *circa* 746 B.C., to nearly the time of the Syro-Ephraimitish war, 735 B.C., that is, about fifteen years after Amos. It was a period of advancing national decay, for after the death of Jeroboam II. the Empire was rent and wasted by the struggles of military adventurers. His son Zechariah was dethroned and slain by Shallum after a reign of only six months, his assassin being himself killed four weeks later by Menahem. With the aid of Assyria, Menahem held the throne for some ten years, but his

son and successor Pekahiah was murdered by Pekah, after ruling for only two years, Pekah being slain in his turn by Hoshea, the last king of Samaria.

Thus the period of Hosea's prophecy was one of frightful violence and confusion; "all ties of social life were loosened; immorality, irreligion, superstition, panic, and despair contributed to the common misery and ruin. It hardly needed prophetic insight to foresee the inevitable end in the total dissolution of the state."

Though the greater part of the prophecy is from the pen of Hosea, it is now generally admitted that it also contains annotations or additions of editors who lived between the eighth and the third century B.C. The book was probably published *by the prophet* in its original form about the year 736 B.C.; and, in common with all literature of the Northern Kingdom, it owes its preservation to the care of the Southern Kingdom. It is tolerably certain that the Jews who preserved the book adapted it to their own use, and that the prophecy of Hosea as we now have it is a Jewish edition of the original work.

Beyond the mention of his father's name, Beeri (1^1), nothing is told us of Hosea's lineage or birthplace, and our knowledge of the man is drawn entirely from the first and third chapters of his prophecy, where certain details of his life are set forth in symbolic language.

It appears from these passages that the prophet married Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, being led to do so by a love in which he felt that he enjoyed the approval

of Yahweh. But after the marriage she proved unfaithful, and Hosea discovered that her heart was set upon the licentious idolatries of the Canaanitish religion. This discovery was not made for a few years, during which they lived happily together, three children being born to them. But the sad truth at last became apparent, and Hosea realized that his children were not his own (1^2); and in the names he gives them in his prophecy, he symbolizes the stain which he received.

It is generally inferred that the prophet's wife left him in order to abandon herself to the lewd practices of the heathen cults, and that she finally sank so low as to be reduced to slavery, when his great love for her compelled him to rescue her from this life of shame by the payment of a ransom (3^2), and bring her back to his home. He could not, of course, reinstate her at once into the position and rights of an honoured wife, but he believed that a love such as his could not fail to evoke a genuine response, and that, having passed through a period of probation, she would yield to his mild discipline, when he would joyfully wed her afresh and establish between them a new and holy covenant which nothing would rend asunder.

In this tragic episode in his life Hosea recognized the symbol of the relationship between Yahweh and Israel, and he believed that God had sent this sorrow to him that he might have a living message for his apostate nation. Thus throughout his book there is the underlying idea of Israel's faithlessness and God's unceasing love.

Whether Hosea survived the downfall of the Northern Kingdom is not known. His grave, still regarded as a sanctuary, is shown in Eastern Jordan on the top of Mount Hosea, about 3 miles north of Es Salt, from which, it is said, one of the most beautiful views in Palestine can be obtained.

The prophecy can be divided into two parts, corresponding to two different periods, namely :

1. Chaps. 1–3, which belong to the time of Jeroboam II.

2. Chaps. 4–14, covering the period of the succeeding kings of Israel.

Thus the first section pictures national plenty and rejoicing, and the second, the anarchy and misrule of Jeroboam's successors ; and so, though the people of the first period are accused of infidelity to Yahweh, they are not charged with that complete moral disintegration which characterized the conduct of later times. The second portion reflects a dark and distracted age of abandoned lawlessness, plotting factions, and of mad dalliance with the great powers of the world. It contains, in short, every indication of the last years of Israel's decline.

JOEL.

Locusts.

The locust, which is represented in British insect life by the grasshopper and by the cricket, belongs to the

order *Orthoptera*, of which over forty different species have been collected in Palestine. In the Bible there are nine Hebrew words used to designate these creatures, these words being variously translated as beetle, grasshopper, cankerworm, palmerworm, locust, bald locust, and caterpillar. Some of this diverse nomenclature is due to the stages through which the insect passes during its development, three of which are apparent to ordinary observers, namely, the larva stage, before the wings are formed; the pupa stage, during which the wings are partially developed but are still contained in the wing cases; and the imago stage, when the insect reaches its final form. In all three stages the creature is capable of movement—hopping, walking, and flying —and is excessively voracious. Locusts breed in desert districts, preferably at some elevation, the eggs being hatched in May and June. In all stages of their growth they are eaten by the natives and form a palatable food.

True locusts are migratory and are seldom bred in the localities which they devastate. They have no settled seasons for their migration, nor do they follow any hereditary course. Of weak flight, they are borne along mainly by the wind, and the statement that the plague of locusts in Egypt was with an east wind is confirmed by modern observation. They are still often destroyed by being driven into the sea with the west wind, as in Exod. 10^{19}.

The allusions in Scripture to the habits of locusts are very numerous, and of these none is more graphic than that given in the second chapter of Joel. The

following extract from the *Journal of Sacred Literature* gives an interesting account of the ravages of the insect in modern times :

" In April, we twice observed, while in Jaffa, large clouds in the sky resembling smoke, moving to and fro, as if swayed by the wind. One morning these clouds came down and proved to be locusts, so great in number that the whole land was covered with them. The grain at that time was full in ear, and nearly ripe, but the locusts did not touch it or any other vegetation. Soon after, however, it was observed that they buried themselves in the soil, and there deposited their innumerable eggs. The Arabs and peasants saw the approaching mischief, and went through the land in thousands digging for these eggs ; they succeeded to a certain extent, and destroyed incredible numbers with water and fire, but all their efforts had very little effect. About the middle of May, small black creatures, at a distance resembling ants, were observed accumulating in large heaps throughout the country ; and a few days after they began to leap. The people now began to sweep them together, and bury or burn them in ditches dug for the purpose. But all to little or no effect, and as they grew larger the extent of their multitude began to be seen, and the coming catastrophe could not be mistaken. The roads were covered with them, all marching in regular lines, like armies of soldiers, with their leaders in front, and all the opposition of man to resist their progress was in vain."

Having consumed the plantations in the country, they

then entered the towns and villages. "Jaffa for several days appeared forsaken, all shops were shut, and all business was suspended; almost all the inhabitants had gone out to destroy and drive away the invading army: but in vain; in parts they covered the ground for miles to a height of several inches. They change in colour as they grow: at first they are black; when about three weeks old they become green, after two weeks more they are yellow, striped with brown; at this stage they have wings, but too small to enable them to fly, and when in an erect position their appearance at a little distance is that of a well-armed horseman; in fourteen days more, when perfect, they are pink below and green above, with various streaks and marks, differing also in colour. At present they are here still in their third stage, when they seem to be the most destructive. The gardens outside Jaffa are now completely stripped, even the bark of the young trees having been destroyed, and look like a birch-tree forest in winter. When they approached our garden, all the farm servants were employed to keep them off, but to no avail; though our men broke their ranks for a moment, no sooner had they passed the men than they closed again, and marched forward, through ditches and hedges, as before. Our garden finished, they continued their march toward the town, devastating one garden after another. They have also penetrated into most of our rooms; whatever one is doing, one hears their noise from without, like the noise of armed hosts, or the running of many waters."

AMOS.

The Book of Amos.

Amos is the earliest of the prophets whose writings have come down to us, for he prophesied in the years when Uzziah and Jeroboam II. were reigning contemporaneously, 775–750 B.C. The exact date of his book cannot now be determined, but it is significant that a total solar eclipse occurred in 763 B.C. (cf. Amos 8^{9}).

By birth and residence Amos was a citizen of the Southern Kingdom of Judah, belonging to the district of Tekoa, a small town about 12 miles south of Jerusalem, situated on a hill standing right on the edge of the desert, where the fringes of agriculture thin away into the wilderness of rock and sand. His vocation was that of a herdman who tended a peculiar breed of desert sheep, and a gatherer and dresser of an inferior type of fig-tree, translated "sycomore."

The time of the prophet's appearance was one of temporary prosperity, and the Northern Kingdom was demoralized by the pride of victory, by wealth, and by luxury. The king, Jeroboam II., had defeated the Syrians, and Israel was enjoying a brief respite from their attacks, deluding herself with the idea that she was again the ruling nation between the Nile and the Euphrates, and that the affairs of the kingdom were as brilliant as in the days of David and Solomon. Thus the people surrendered themselves to a life of ease. They lived in houses of ivory (Amos 3^{15}), in houses of

hewn stone (5^{11}); wherever one might turn there were "castles and forts, horses and chariots, splendour and riches. Daily they slew the fatted calf, drank costly wines (6^{6}), and anointed themselves with precious oils as they lay sumptuously upon their damask cushions." Even Assyria was not feared, though she was looming on the horizon like a dark thundercloud, as king and people, careless of the welfare alike of religion and of state, gave themselves up to the enjoyment of the hour. But suddenly, in the very midst of their revelry, the inspired figure of the prophet Amos bursts upon them, "a divine fire gleaming in his eye, a holy gravity suffusing his manly countenance, and before the people have realized what has happened he has drowned their festive songs by the piercing mournful cry of his lamentation :

> 'The Virgin of Israel is fallen;
> She shall no more rise:
> She is cast down upon her land.
> There is none to raise her up' (Amos 5^{2}).

The Assembly is seized with consternation and astonishment, until Amaziah the priest comes up and addresses the bold speaker in these words :

"O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there (*i.e.* for hire): but prophesy not again any more at Beth-el: for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a royal house" ($7^{12.\ 13}$). And Amos answered: "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdman, and a dresser of sycomore trees: and the Lord took me

from following the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel" ($7^{14.\ 15}$).

Then with swift intuition he suddenly threatens the High Priest himself in these solemn words: "Thus saith the Lord: Thy wife shall be an harlot in the city, and thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword, and thy land shall be divided by line; and thou thyself shalt die in a land that is unclean" (7^{17}).

After delivering his message Amos returned home to his sycomore trees and his sheep, and there he wrote down his incomparable oracles.

His writings reflect his daily life with extraordinary fidelity, and the book teems with reminders of the desert life and of the shepherd's experience. The circumstances to which he probably owed his range of knowledge are indicated by Principal Sir George Adam Smith: "As a wool grower Amos must have had his yearly journeys among the markets of the land; and to such were probably due his opportunities of familiarity with Northern Israel, the originals of his vivid pictures of her town life, her commerce, and the worship at her great sanctuaries; it is even possible that he went to Damascus, in which the Israelites had at the time their own quarters for trading (1 Kings 20^{34}). By road and market he would meet with men of other lands. Phœnician pedlars, or Canaanites as they were called, came up to buy the homespun for which the housewives of Israel were famed (Prov. 31^{24}); hard-faced men, who were also willing to purchase slaves, and haunted even the battlefields of their neighbours

for this sinister purpose. Men of Moab, at the time subject to Israel; Aramean hostages; Philistines who held the export trade to Egypt; these Amos must have met and may have talked with—their dialects scarcely differed from his own. It is no distant, desert echo of life which we hear in his pages, but the thick and noisy rumour of caravan and market-place; how the plague was marching up from Egypt (Amos 6^{10}); ugly stories of the Phœnician slave-trade (1^{9}); rumours of the advance of the awful Power, which men were hardly yet accustomed to name, but which had already twice broken from the north upon Damascus. Or, at closer quarters, we see and hear the bustle of the great festivals and fairs—the solemn assemblies, the reeking holocausts, the noise of songs and viols ($5^{21ff.}$); the brutish religious zeal kindling into drunkenness and lust on the very steps of the altar ($2^{7.\ 8}$); the embezzlement of pledges by the priests; the covetous restlessness of the traders, their false measures, their entanglement of the poor in debt ($8^{4ff.}$); the careless luxury of the rich, their banquets, buckets of wine, ivory couches, pretentious, preposterous music ($6^{1.\ 4-7}$). These things are described as by an eye-witness."

Even the dramatic interruption of the revellers in the king's court at Bethel is in keeping with the manners of the East, and Prof. Robertson Smith draws attention to the fact that at the courts of the Caliphs and their Emirs the rude Arabs of the desert were wont to appear without any feeling of awkwardness, and to surprise the courtiers by the finish of their impromptu verses,

the fluent eloquence of their oratory, and the range of subjects on which they could speak with knowledge and discrimination.

The Sycomore Tree.

The sycomore or fig-mulberry tree is a large tree which once grew abundantly in the mild climate of the Maritime Plain of Palestine, but to-day is found in any quantity only in the Jordan Valley. In appearance it somewhat resembles the English oak with its low-spreading branches and dark foliage. It is evergreen and bears a fruit, of the shape and structure of the common fig, which grows in clusters. The taste is woody and insipid, and the fruit is very inferior to the ordinary fig in both flavour and size. It is infested with an insect, and until the top has been punctured, so that the insect may escape, it is not edible. It is probably this operation that is alluded to in the phrase "a dresser of sycomore trees" (Amos 7^{14}), while the poor quality of the fruit is referred to in Jeremiah's vision of the "very bad figs" (Jer. 24^{2}). The sycomore was (and is) one of the commonest trees of Egypt, and its wood was employed for the manufacture of mummy cases, and for doors, boxes, and all articles of furniture. It is very light and porous, but its durability is proved by the soundness of the mummy cases after being entombed for thousands of years. Probably, however, the Egyptians had not much choice, as it is almost the only timber tree of any size common

in that country. It is very susceptible to cold, and cannot bear frost. This, as well as its abundance in Egypt, is alluded to by the Psalmist: "He destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycomore trees with frost" (Ps. 78[47]). So valuable was this tree considered in David's time that special overseers were detailed to protect its cultivation (1 Chron. 27[28]), and even to-day the Turks regard it as a royal tree and the government claims rent for the produce wherever it is planted. Such a large and well-covered tree is naturally valued in the hot climate of the East for its grateful shade; it is consequently a favourite wayside tree, and is often planted near an Arab café to tempt the wayfarer to rest. And because its short trunk and wide lateral branches make it an easy tree to climb, Zacchæus selected a sycomore as a good position to take up when he wished to obtain a view of Christ as He passed by (Lk. 19[4]).

The Feasts of Trumpets and New Moons.

The Feast of Trumpets was celebrated at the beginning, or on the first day, of the civil year, which was in the month Tishri, answering to our September. It was a particularly solemn day and distinct from other new-moon days because it was also the beginning of the seventh Sabbatical month, in which the great feasts of the Day of Atonement and of Tabernacles occurred. In Lev. 23[24] it is designated as the "memorial of blowing of trumpets," because on that day the horns

were winded all day long in Jerusalem. The day was further demarcated by abstinence from all servile work and by the holding of a solemn convocation. Special sacrifices and offerings were appointed and Pss. 81 and 29 were sung, the former during the pouring out of the drink-offering in the morning, and the latter at the evening sacrifice.

The form of horn or trumpet used became very important. Two types of wind instrument belonged to the Temple usage, the long straight brass trumpet with a bell end, and the curved animal horn. The Mishnah holds that cow horns must not be used because God would thereby be reminded of the sin of the golden calf, but that antelope's and ram's horns are legitimate, the latter being favoured on account of the association of a ram with the arrested sacrifice of Isaac. Special golden mouthpieces were also fitted to the horns on this day as distinct from the silver mouthpieces ordinarily used. According to the Rabbis, the blowing of the horns was intended first to bring Israel in remembrance before the Lord; secondly, to confound Satan; and thirdly, to awaken men to repentance.

From Scripture we know with what solemnity the first day of the seventh month was observed at the time of Ezra, and how deeply moved the people were by the public reading of the Law after their long exile from their national religious privileges. In the N.T. there is no reference to the feast unless Eph. 5^{14} is an allusion to the sound of the trumpets on that day, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall

shine upon thee." This verse bears a resemblance to the words: "Rouse ye, rouse ye from your slumber, awake, awake from your sleep," which are considered by Dr. Edersheim possibly to have been a part of the old ritual.

The natural monthly phenomenon of the New Moon was celebrated by the Hebrews as a religious festival, the observance of which may be traced throughout the history of Israel. At the time of Saul it was the occasion of a State banquet (1 Sam. 20^{6}). In the time of Elisha the Day of the New Moon seems to have been the one selected for some special religious meeting, for when the Shunammite woman's husband was urged to send to the prophet at the time of her sorrow he replied: "Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? it is neither new moon nor sabbath" (2 Kings 4^{23}). Even in the time of national religious decadence, as depicted in Amos, the rites of the New Moon were observed (Amos 8^{5}), while St. Paul's admonition in Col. $2^{16.\ 17}$ shows that in N.T. days there was no decline in the custom.

The Law enjoined that the New Moon should be recognized by the blowing of trumpets (Num. 10^{10}) and the offering of sacrifices (Num. 28^{11-15}), from which it will be inferred that the Feast of Trumpets was in some ways simply a fuller and more solemn form of the usual monthly observance.

The following ritual is described by Dr. Edersheim as being in vogue after the full establishment of the religious system inaugurated by Ezra and Nehemiah.

"The council sat from early morning to just before the evening sacrifice, to determine the appearance of the new moon. The proclamation of the Council—'It is sanctified'—and not the actual appearance of the new moon, determined the commencement of the feast. Immediately afterwards, the priests blew the trumpets which marked the feast. After the ordinary morning sacrifice, the prescribed festive offerings were brought, the blood of the burnt-offerings being thrown round the base of the altar below the red line, and the rest poured out into the channel at the south side of the altar; while the blood of the sin-offering was sprinkled or dropped from the finger on the horns of the altar of burnt-offering, beginning from the east, the rest being poured out, as that of the burnt-offerings. In all no less than 107 priests officiated at this burnt-offering—20 with every bullock, 11 with every ram, and 8 with every lamb, including, of course, those who carried the appropriate meat- and drink-offerings. At the offering of these sacrifices the trumpets were again blown. All of them were slain at the north side of the altar, while the peace- and freewill-offerings, which private Israelites were wont at such seasons to bring, were sacrificed at the south side. The flesh of the sin-offering, and what of the meat-offering came to them, was eaten by the priests in the Temple itself; their portion of the private thank-offerings might be taken by them to their homes in Jerusalem, and there eaten with their households.

"If any special prayers were said in the Temple on New

Moons' Days, tradition has not preserved them, the only formula dating from that period being that used on first seeing the moon: 'Blessed be He who reneweth the months.' At a yet much later period, a very superstitious prayer was inserted, its repetition being accompanied by leaping towards the moon. New Moon's Day, though apparently observed in the time of Amos as a day of rest, is not so kept by the Jews in modern times."

Bethel.

Bethel (House of God), originally called Luz, is represented by the modern Beîtin, about 12 miles north of Jerusalem. There is a village, of a few dilapidated houses, standing on the slope of a bare limestone hill above the point where two valleys draw together. At the present day the site is one of the most desolate in Palestine. "All the neighbourhood is of grey bare stone, or white chalk. The miserable fields are fenced in with stone walls, the hovels are rudely built of stone, the hill to the east is of hard rock, with only a few scattered fig-gardens, the ancient sepulchres are cut in a low cliff, and a great reservoir south of the village is excavated in rock. The place seems as it were turned to stone." Professor Sayce, when he visited Beîtin, "was struck by the fact that the limestone rocks on the summit of the hill are piled one on the other like a gigantic stair-case." It may well have been that in his dream Jacob seemed to see the rocks of the hill forming themselves into a mighty temple-structure, like

that of the Babylonian zikkurat, whose terraced sides rose up like huge stairs to heaven.

It was on "the mountain east of Bethel" that Abraham pitched his tent and erected an altar when he was journeying through the land on his way to Egypt. Here Abraham and Lot may have stood when they took their survey of the country, and Lot's choice fell on the rich Jordan Valley. "And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever" (Gen. $13^{14.\ 15}$). "To the south and the west the view commanded the bleak hills of Judæa, varied by the heights crowned with what was afterwards the city of Benjamin, and overhanging what in a later day was to be Jerusalem, and in the far distance the southern range on whose slope is Hebron. Northward are the hills which divide Judæa from the rich plains of Samaria." [1]

The next scene associates Bethel with the visit of Jacob. "And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took one of the stones of the place, and put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep" (Gen. $28^{10.\ 11}$). There Jacob had his vision, and there he set up a pillar or mazzebah, not merely to be a memorial of the event, but to act as "the shrine

[1] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine.*

of the Deity, and the symbol of His presence." According to a Jewish tradition the pillar of Bethel was taken to the Second Temple and used there as a pedestal for the ark.

In the time of the Judges, Bethel was a centre of religious worship; the ark was established there, and it was also one of the national centres of assize, visited by Samuel in circuit. After the disruption of the kingdom it attained the double importance of a religious sanctuary and a border fortress, lying as it did on the frontier of both kingdoms. Jeroboam I., making use of the sanctity attached to Bethel to serve his own political ends, set up a shrine there to rival Jerusalem, and instituted the worship of golden calves. But it was not till the time of Jeroboam II. that Bethel reached the summit of its splendour and importance as "a sanctuary of the king" and "house of the kingdom." A priesthood and a college of prophets was established, and an elaborate ritual came into existence. "I hate, I despise your feasts" says Amos, "and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me your burnt offerings and meal offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols" (Amos 5^{21-23}). Hosea also joins in the denunciation of Bethel, changing its name from Bethel, "house of God," to Beth-aven, "house of iniquity," or "idolatry."

The last scene in the history of Bethel shows it given

up to the reforming zeal of Josiah. "The altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, even that altar and the high place he brake down; and he burned the high place and stamped it small to powder, and burned the Asherah. . . . And took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and defiled it" (2 Kings $23^{15.16}$). The ruin, foretold by Amos and Hosea, had descended upon the city. Bethel had "come to nought."

OBADIAH.

Edom.

Edom lay to the south of Palestine between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Akaba. On the east it touched on the territory of Moab and the tribes of the great desert. On the west it was bounded by the Arabah, the route followed by the Israelites from the peninsula of Sinai to Kadesh-barnea.

"Edom" and "Seir" are terms frequently used interchangeably to designate this region occupied by Esau and his descendants. The word "seir" means "rough" or "hairy"; "Esau" has the same meaning. "Edom" in the Hebrew is "red," and in Gen. 26^{1} Esau is called Edom. The land which he inherited was a land of red cliffs, and he himself was described as being "red" (Gen. 25^{25}). He was a "hairy," "shaggy," man, and his inheritance, by another name,

was called "Seir," which has just these meanings. It was for a mess of red pottage that he sold his birthright.

The district of Edom is at the present time divided into two parts. The northern section is called El Jebal, which corresponds to the Gebal of the Hebrew. The southern part is known as Es Sherah, and contains, in Wady Musa, the ruins of the ancient capital of Edom, Sela (the rock) (2 Kings 14^{7}). The region is on the whole unfruitful and barren except in certain districts immediately south of the Dead Sea. The promise of Isaac that Esau's portion would be of the fatness of the earth and the dew of heaven hardly corresponds with the dry soil and the chalky rocks of the Edom of to-day.

The original inhabitants of the land were Horites, "cave dwellers." Deut. 2^{22} indicates that the Edomites became powerful enough to extirpate the former inhabitants of the land, whose customs and manner of life they adopted. But the genealogies in Gen. 36 show that the destruction was not complete and that there was intermarriage between the two races.

Edom had eight kings before the first king ruled in Israel (Gen. 36^{31-39}). When the Israelites appeared on the borders of Edom they were not attacked by the people of the land, but they were not allowed to pass through the land and so they made their way round its borders. Four hundred years later the Edomites were attacked and defeated by Saul (1 Sam 14^{47}). David then waged war with this people and overthrew them

in the Valley of Salt. He left garrisons in the land (2 Sam. 8^{14}), and for some time Edom seems to have remained subject to Israel. At the period when Israel divided into two kingdoms, Edom became a dependency of Judah.

But in the days of Jehoram, king of Judah, the Edomites asserted themselves again, and elected a king of their own (2 Kings 8^{20}). The Valley of Salt was the scene of another defeat of the Edomites, in which 10,000 were slain by the Israelites under Amaziah. Their capital city, Sela, was taken and the name of it changed to Joktheel, "subdued by God." The historian says that it continued to be so called "to this day"; but it is evident that this name was not retained for any length of time. Even in the reign of Ahaz, the Edomites had recovered to the extent of entering the territory of Judah and threatening Hebron.

"Remember, O Lord, against the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof" (Ps. 137^{7}). The Edomites had not only rejoiced in the overthrow of Jerusalem, but had joined in its spoliation and cut off the fugitives. The fact that they were near neighbours and relatives of the Israelites intensified the bitterness with which Israel ever afterwards regarded their conduct. It was under the name of "Edom" that the Jews of the Middle Ages denounced their destroyer and persecutor, Rome.

JONAH.

The Book of Jonah.

The prophet Jonah was ordered by God to go to the city of Nineveh and warn the inhabitants of their destruction on account of their sins. He refused, and entered a ship bound for Tarshish—probably the place in Spain called by the Greeks Tartessus. A storm arose, and the sailors, mostly Phœnicians no doubt, cast lots to find out with whom the gods were angry. The lot fell on Jonah, and he was thrown into the sea. But God had "prepared a great fish" which swallowed him. After three days and nights, during which he had composed a prayer to God (or rather a beautiful psalm of praise), Jonah was cast by the fish on some unnamed coast. He then proceeded to Nineveh and announced the speedy destruction of the city. But the people repented and were spared.

And now we see the reason why Jonah refused to go to Nineveh at first. He feared that Yahweh would repent of His purpose and spare the Ninevites after he had told them that they would certainly perish. And this was just what happened. Jonah was very angry. He went out of the city and lay down in a booth. A bottle-gourd (possibly a castor-oil plant) sprang up and sheltered him from the sun. But it perished as speedily as it had sprung up; and Jonah mourned the loss of it, when sun and wind again beat fiercely on him. Then the word of Yahweh came to him: If he

was so grieved over the loss of the gourd, a mere plant, which had sprung up and withered so quickly, how much more grieved would Yahweh be to have to destroy Nineveh, "that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle."

The Book of Jonah is plainly a parable. It seems strange to us now that it could ever have been regarded as literal history. It was written long after the time of the prophet Jonah mentioned in 2 Kings 14^{25}. The language is late, and the way in which the king of Assyria is referred to shows that Nineveh had long ceased to exist. Its date may have been somewhere between 400 and 300 B.C. But the late date makes its lesson—a lesson in toleration, and that for Gentiles—only the more remarkable. For the Jews were already possessed by a spirit of narrow exclusiveness which only grew worse as time passed, until it reached its climax among the Pharisees of Christ's day.

The book is full of local colour—the ship, the casting of lots, the great fish, the gourd, the city with its multitude of little children and "much cattle." Parallels to some of the incidents have been found in other literature. The most striking is the following, belonging to Buddhism: A young man of Benares named Mittavindaka, the son of a merchant, went to sea in defiance of his mother's objection. When after a time the vessel was unable to proceed on its course, owing to some mysterious impediment, the sailors concluded

that it must be through the sin of some one on board, and therefore cast lots to discover the offender. The lots were cast three times, and each time the lot fell to Mittavindaka. As he was clearly the culprit, they turned him out of the ship, and placed him on a raft. Their ship was then able to continue the voyage. The close correspondence of this Indian story with the part of the Biblical story referred to is very remarkable, but need not point to any connection between the two beyond community of feeling and action, under similar circumstances, of Indian and Phœnician mariners.

MICAH.

The Prophecy of Micah.

The Book of Micah stands in our English Bible as the sixth of the Minor Prophets. In the Septuagint it stood third, preceded by Amos and Hosea. In the Hebrew Canon it was also placed sixth in the collection of prophecies known about 180 B.C. as "the Twelve Prophets."

The name Micah was a common one among the Hebrews, and it occurs twelve times in the Old Testament, though spelt in different ways. The full name is Micajahu, a partially shortened form is Micaiah, while a still shorter form is the familiar one of Micah. The word means "Who is like Yahweh?"

Micah the Morashtite, who wrote the book bearing his name, was a contemporary of Isaiah, that is to say,

a generation later than Amos, and later, too, than Hosea, and his activity coincides with the mid career of Isaiah. His birthplace, Moresheth-gath, was an obscure village in the Western lowlands of Judæa, bordering on Philistia and a full day's journey from Jerusalem.

In Jerome's day the place was known in the vicinity of Eleutheropolis. It claimed the prophet's grave, and a church was built over the traditional site. Of Micah's trade or profession we have no information, but it is presumed that he belonged to the peasant class.

That he was well known is proved by the reference to him in the Book of Jeremiah (26^{16-19}), where a precedent, created in Micah's case, is quoted as an argument in favour of sparing Jeremiah when the latter prophet was arraigned for high treason. "Then rose up certain of the elders of the land, and spake to all the assembly of the people, saying, Micaiah the Morashtite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah, king of Judah; and he spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Zion shall be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps. . . . (cf. Mic. 3^{12}). Did Hezekiah, king of Judah, and all Judah put him at all to death? did he not fear the Lord, and intreat the favour of the Lord, and the Lord repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them?"

This incident in Micah's ministry has a close resemblance to the dramatic appearance of Amos at the Northern court at Bethel, and it would seem, too, that Micah received his call in the same way that Amos

did, and that, like his predecessor, the prophet of Judah, burning with indignation at the social and religious wrongs of his day, dared to face the king's anger, though with the happier result that his warnings to Hezekiah did not fall on unheeding ears.

The Northern Kingdom had not fallen when Micah began to prophesy, for he exercised his prophetical gifts as early as the reign of Jotham, though he first came into prominence during the reign of Hezekiah.

The Book is divisible into three sections :

1. *Prophecies of Denunciation and Punishment* (Chaps. 1–3).

" The date of this section of the Book may be approximately dated between 725 B.C., when Shalmaneser began the siege of Samaria, and the year or two which followed its destruction by Sargon in 721 B.C. When Sargon marched on through the Shephelah to his victory at Raphia in 719 B.C. it may be that Micah broke silence just as the great Assyrian army was clattering past Moresheth, fresh from the ruin of Samaria. It is, however, possible that chaps. 2 and 3 were composed a few years later, between 719 and 701 B.C., the year when Sennacherib was driven back from Jerusalem.

" In any case the motive of the whole prophecy is the iniquity of Israel which brought the Assyrian to Samaria, and the social corruption in Jerusalem, following the prosperous years of Amaziah (2 Kings 14^{7-22}),

which was bringing the same dreaded enemy to punish the Southern Kingdom." (Horton.)

2. *Prophecies of Promise* (Chaps. 4–5).

This section contains a collection of brief prophecies, many of which are fragments, as, *e.g.*, 4^{1-4}, which also occurs in Is. 2^{2-4}. These two chapters are very different in feeling from those in the first section. In the first the prophet sees a restored Temple accepted as the religious and moral centre of a world where the people of Judah are living in peace and plenty (4^{4}). The fifth chapter contains a Messianic prophecy ($5^{2ff.}$), the foes of Jerusalem being told that one will arise from Bethlehem Ephratah who will be ruler in Israel and deliver its people from the Assyrians ($5^{5.\ 6}$), showing that the writer expected this deliverance to take place in the immediate future, just as the Apostles, long afterwards, expected Jesus to appear the second time in their own generation.

3. *Miscellaneous Prophecies dealing with the Dark Days of Manasseh's Reign* (Chaps. 6–7).

The unity of these chapters is questioned though the local colour for the most part is consistent with the state of things in the eighth century. Verse 7 chap. 6 may refer to the time of Manasseh, who offered one of his sons in sacrifice (2 Kings $21^{2ff.}$), a practice which afterwards became common. But $7^{11ff.}$ is regarded as post-Exilic.

NAHUM.

The Fall of Assyria.

The prophecy of Nahum occupies the same place to-day in the succession of Minor Prophets that was assigned to it in the Hebrew Bible and in the Septuagint.

Of the prophet himself nothing is known except such scanty facts as can be gathered from his book. The name means "full of comfort," and was not an uncommon one among the Hebrews, though no other person bears it in the Old Testament. In his prophecy Nahum is termed the "Elkoshite," which is probably meant to designate his birthplace or home, a generally accepted tradition associating him with Elkosh, a small hamlet situated about half-way between Jerusalem and Gaza. In time, Nahum was contemporary with Zephaniah, publishing his work about two years later. The prophecy of Nahum is devoted to a single theme: it is a cry of exultation over the impending fall of Nineveh and therefore of the Assyrian Empire.

For many generations Assyria had occupied the foremost place among the nations of the world. Judah had suffered at the hands of the Assyrians in the days of Hezekiah, and Jerusalem had been saved from destruction only by the providential outbreak of disease among the besieging troops. Thereafter the Assyrians, under Esarhaddon, the successor of Sennacherib, besieged and captured Sidon (676 B.C.), and in the year 670 this king attacked Egypt, advancing as far

as Memphis, the capital of Lower Egypt, and converting this country into an Assyrian province. This project was continued by Ashurbanipal with complete success, allusions to which are found in Nahum 3^{8-10}. Ashurbanipal next invaded Armenia and Elam, bringing back from these campaigns an extraordinary amount of booty, and leaving behind a relic of hatred intense as the hatred of the Serbs for the Bulgars in modern times. For the Assyrians were masters in the art of war, and they employed the policy of frightfulness to its most ruthless extent.

But they had not the genius, possessed later by the Romans, of organizing conquered peoples into an empire, and after the brilliant reign of Ashurbanipal the power of Assyria began to wane, and the destiny which had destroyed the power of ancient Chaldea, of Egypt, of the Hittite Empire, and of Syria, began to knock at her gates. From the coasts of the Black Sea a wild horde of barbarians burst forth, spreading desolation and terror. Egypt, which had long been the vassal of Assyria, tore herself away from the grasp of her Northern conquerors, and the Medes, who once had lost their independence and paid tribute to the Assyrian kings, regained their liberty and attacked their old and cruel foe.

To the clear penetration of Nahum it was evident that Assyria was doomed, and that the judgment which she had so well merited by her relentless persecution and oppression of God's chosen people was about to fall. The precise course of events, which terminated

in the destructiom of Nineveh, is not clear, but the fact remains that about 607 B.C. the city ceased to exist, and so complete was her downfall that only 200 years later, when Xenophon passed the site of the city (401 B.C.), only the memory of the place survived. The buildings of Nineveh, constructed for the most part of unburnt brick, were converted by rain into masses of clay which slowly shaped themselves into grass-covered mounds. "It was reserved for the explorers of the last century, especially Botta, Layard, and Rassam, to penetrate into those mounds, and to exhume from them the still vocal monuments of the art, and literature, and history, and civilization of an empire which for more than five centuries had dominated the fortunes of the greater part of Western Asia, and which also, beyond perhaps anything else, had given occasion to the prophets of Israel for some of their greatest utterances."

The Scythians.

The oracle of Nahum the Elkoshite prophesying the destruction of Nineveh (Nah. 3) is generally held to refer to the second siege of the city by the Medes under Cyaxares, that siege which was interrupted by the unexpected invasion of the Scythians. The previous campaign of Phraortes against Assyria had failed before the defences of Nineveh, and the Medes had been obliged to retreat. But Assyrian power was on the wane, and Phraortes' son and successor, Cyaxares, returning

with a reorganized army to the attack, defeated the Assyrians in the field and advanced once more to the siege of Nineveh. It seemed as though the fulfilment of Nahum's prophecy were at hand: "All they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is laid waste: who will bemoan her! . . . All thy strong holds shall be like fig trees with the first-ripe figs: if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater. Behold, thy people in the midst of thee are women; the gates of thy land shall be set wide open unto thine enemies: the fire shall devour thy bars." But the fate of Nineveh was destined to be delayed, for at this critical period the Medes were suddenly attacked by hordes of Scythians under King Madyes, sweeping down from the north-east, and were forced to raise the siege of the city. The Scythians, setting out from the steppes of Southern Russia about 625 B.C., had pressed southwards in the track of the Cimmerian invasion of 650 B.C., and advanced through Media as far as the gates of Nineveh. Not only did they defeat Cyaxares and compel him to raise the siege; they also overran his country, carrying devastation through the land.

It was not altogether chance that brought this sudden relief to Nineveh, for Assyria had long been in touch with the Scythians, and their union had been cemented by the marriage of the Scythian king Bartatua with a daughter of Esarhaddon. So the intervention of the Scythians may be regarded as the outcome of their Assyrian alliance. But they did not remain faithful

to their allies. The conquest of Media whetted their appetite for further triumphs, and Madyes turned his forces into Assyria, plundering and laying waste the defenceless country. They then traversed Syria and Palestine and advanced to the borders of Egypt, where Psammetichus was glad to buy them off with bribes. Those fierce opponents of Assyria, the Tabali and Mushki, whose ruin affords a sombre joy to Ezekiel, also went down before the storm. "There is Meshech, Tubal, and all her multitude; her graves are round about him: all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword; though they caused their terror in the land of the living" (Ezek. 32^{26}).

At the time of the Scythian peril, Josiah, who came to the throne of Judah in 638 B.C. at the age of eight, had been king, in name at least, for twelve years. His predecessors, Manasseh and Amon, had openly favoured the idolatrous practices that Hezekiah had attempted to stamp out, but there were signs now, under Josiah, of a reaction against the foreign innovations and a desire to return to the purity of worship supported by Hezekiah. The prophets saw the hand of Yahweh in the menace of the Scythian invasion, and began to speak of the approach of the judgment day of Yahweh when He would "consume all things from off the face of the ground, . . . and cut off man from the face of the earth." Saith Yahweh, "I will stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the name of the Chemarims with the priests" (cf. Zeph. 1^{2-7}). It is during this troubled

period also that Jeremiah makes his first prophetic utterances in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah. He seeks to waken Judah from the moral slumber into which it has sunk, and to stir it to a realization of its peril. "I will bring evil from the north, and a great destruction. A lion is gone up from his thicket, and a destroyer of nations; he is on his way, he is gone forth from his place; to make thy land desolate, that thy cities be laid waste, without inhabitant. . . . A people cometh from the north country; and a great nation shall be stirred up from the uttermost parts of the earth. They lay hold on bow and spear; they are cruel, and have no mercy" (Jer. 4^{6-7} $6^{22.\ 23}$).

"In war," according to McCurdy, "their customs were very barbarous. The Scythian who slew his enemy in wrath immediately proceeded to drink his blood. He then cut off his head, after which he stripped the scalp from the skull, and hung it on his bridle-rein as a trophy. The upper portion of the skull he commonly made into a drinking-cup. They are represented, no doubt with some exaggeration, as a people coarse and gross in their habits, with stout fleshy bodies, loose joints, and scanty hair. They never washed; their nearest approach to ablution was a vapour-bath." Maspero says that, as regards dress, they wore on their heads "the *kyrbasis*, or pointed national cap of felt," and that they had "breeches and a blouse of embroidered leather." They were armed, in addition to their famous bow and arrows, with a short spear and battle-axe, and sometimes carried a sword.

It seems likely that Judah itself did not suffer the incursion of these northern hordes, but Galilee and Samaria and the Philistian plain were overrun, and probably suffered enormous damage. Their stay, however, was in all likelihood a short one. Herodotus declares that the duration of their invasion was twenty-eight years, but in a settlement of that length they would certainly have left some permanent traces. Probably they withdrew after a few years. A memory of their occupation may, however, be contained in the name Scythopolis, "the city of the Scythians," given in later days to Beth-Shan. The rapid disappearance of the Scythians as an organized force was due, no doubt, to disease, casualties in their incessant warfare and the difficulty in filling the gaps, intermingling with the other races, and, probably, the desertion and return of many to their native land.

HABAKKUK.

The Book of Habakkuk.

Habakkuk is the third of the group of three prophets, comprising himself, Nahum, and Zephaniah, who prophesied before the final downfall of the Southern Kingdom. His book belongs, probably, to the year 600 B.C., that is, to a time shortly after the appearance of the Chaldeans or Neo-Babylonians on the stage of the world's history, and in the reign of Jehoiakim, who succeeded Josiah.

Josiah perished in the Egyptian war when Pharaoh-Necho invaded the Assyrian provinces. Judah falling into Egypt's hands, Josiah's successor, Jehoiakim, reigned as Pharaoh's vassal. But the powerful combination of the Medes and Chaldeans which overthrew the old power of Assyria also shattered the Egyptian army at Carchemish, 605 B.C., and, Pharaoh being driven back, the whole of Western Asia fell to the lot of the Babylonians, and the vassalage of the last kings of Judah was transferred from Egypt to Chaldea.

The Book of Habakkuk was issued shortly before the arrival of Nebuchadrezzar and his army at the gates of Jerusalem. Concerning the prophet himself nothing is known. His name is derived from the Hebrew verb "to embrace," and is variously interpreted "the beloved one" or "the comforter," this meaning having been made use of by Luther, who declared that in this prophecy Habakkuk caresses his people as one caresses a weeping child. From the contents of the Book it would appear that the prophet lived in Jerusalem.

But though the O.T. has little to tell us about Habakkuk, later Jewish traditions are full, and in *Bel and the Dragon* there is the preface, "From the prophecy of Habakkuk, the son of Joshua, of the tribe of Levi," while this apocryphal book contains an absurd legend about the prophet's visit to Daniel in the lion's den. According to the *Lives of the Prophets*, a work of the early Fathers, Habakkuk was of the tribe of Simeon, and in these same "Lives" it is stated that when Nebuchadrezzar advanced against Jerusalem

Habakkuk fled to Egypt, but that he returned to his own land, where he died.

ZEPHANIAH.

The Book of Zephaniah.

Nearly a century of time divides the prophecies of Isaiah from those of Zephaniah, a period of violent reaction against the prophets, and a terrible reversion to the cruel and immoral worship of Baal and Ashtoreth under the wicked reigns of Manasseh and Amon. During this dark and terrible interval the prophets were no longer looked up to as the oracles of God and the leaders of the people; their honour and prestige had gone, and the sword devoured them "like a raging lion," so that all Jerusalem ran with their blood. All that Hezekiah had restored was overthrown, all the evils that he had destroyed were resurrected, genuine paganism made its entry once more into Judæa, and Baal-worship became the State religion, even the king's own son being sacrificed by fire upon the altars of Moloch.

For nearly 100 years, while these horrors were rampant, the voices of prophecy were dumb. The words of Isaiah which promised the indestructibility of Zion and the House of David were forgotten, and it became the settled conviction of the devout men of Judah that God could never forgive the awful wickedness that He now beheld, and that the total destruction of the nation was absolutely inevitable.

But with the accession of the good Josiah a religious revival swept over the land, and though Zephaniah, who first broke the prophetic silence, pronounced his oracles before the Deuteronomic reform in 621 B.C., which resulted from the discovery of the Law Book in the Temple, yet he and his contemporary Nahum must have felt the revivifying power which was descending upon their nation, and which was soon to produce a religious change that contained the springs of an eternity.

Zephaniah is regarded by many as a descendant of King Hezekiah, that name being synonymous with the Hizkiah to whom the prophet's pedigree is traced with such fulness. He was probably not more than twenty-five years of age when he began to prophesy, and his oracles must have been published about 627 B.C. They could not have appeared after the reformation in 621, since the allusions in the first chapter point to a continuance of the heathen worship instituted by Manasseh. He prophesied and wrote his book in Jerusalem.

The first two chapters form a single prophecy, whose subject is primarily that of a terrible judgment which is to involve the whole world, falling on every class alike—on man and beast ($1^{2.3}$), on the devotees of false religions (1^{4-6}), and on princes, merchants, and people (1^{8-13}). This wave of avenging desolation will sweep over every land from Philistia in the west to Moab and Ammon in the east (2^{8-11}), and from Ethiopia in the south to Assyria in the north (2^{13-15}). The ground of this judgment in the case of Judah is found in the prevalence of Baal-worship and the disregard for Yahweh ;

in the case of Moab and Ammon in the contemptuous taunts they have thrown at Judah, and in the case of Assyria in her presumptuous arrogance and self-confidence. No reason is assigned for the doom pronounced upon Ethiopia.

The general opinion of scholars to-day is that the impending catastrophe thus foretold by Zephaniah was believed by him to be coming from the Scythian hordes —those wicked tribes of horsemen who, after the manner of the Huns of later times, were beginning to overrun all Asia, spreading desolation and terror wherever they went.

Chap. 3 contains, first, a denunciation of the sin of Jerusalem (v.$^{1-7}$); secondly, another oracle of universal judgment, from which only a godly remnant of Judah will escape (v.$^{8-13}$); and, lastly, a psalm of thanksgiving descriptive of the glory of the Jews, after Yahweh has delivered them from captivity (v.$^{14-20}$). This concluding passage is generally believed to be a post-Exilic addition.

HAGGAI.

The Book of Haggai.

The series of Minor Prophets in our English Version is closed by a group of three post-Exilic writers—Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi—whose books, together with the historical work Ezra to Nehemiah, are the main sources of information at present possessed concerning the Restoration. Of these, Haggai is the first in order,

as he is first in date. Tradition states that he was born in Babylon, and that he went up to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel in the reign of Cyrus 538 B.C. He was associated in his work with the prophet Zechariah.

The prophecies of Haggai are dated in the second year of the Persian monarch, Darius Hystaspis, 520 B.C., seventeen years after the return of the Jews from Babylonia. The exiles had settled partly in Jerusalem and partly in neighbouring towns and villages, and the first public act of the restored community had been the erection of the altar of burnt-offering upon its old site (Ezra $3^{2ff.}$). Thereafter began the building of the Second Temple, the foundation stone probably being formally laid in the year 536. But for various reasons the building was not continued, and sixteen years of inactivity elapsed. The country was insecure; the land had lain neglected for many years, and the task of recultivation was long and arduous; a succession of bad seasons occurred; everywhere, in contradistinction to the glorious promises of Isaiah, were poverty and desolation. The people concluded that the wrath of Yahweh was not removed (Zech. 1^{12}), and that the time for the building of His house had not yet come (Hag. 1^{2}).

In the meantime important changes were happening in Persia; the provinces were revolting, war clouds loomed on the horizon, and the authority of Darius was only at last sustained by nineteen battles. News of these disturbances naturally reached Jerusalem and awoke in the Jews the old hope that the time for the overthrow of pagan supremacy was near (Hag. $2^{7. 9. 21-23}$).

So Haggai, infected with this faith, preaches an ideal kingdom, and urges the rapid completion of the Temple that it may be the religious centre of the world.

CONTENTS AND ANALYSIS.

The Book of Haggai consists of four short prophecies delivered on three different occasions:

i. *The First Prophecy* (Chap. 1).

This was delivered on the first day of the sixth month and is an indignant taunt at the selfishness and indolence which allowed the Temple to remain a ruin. This, Haggai declares, is the cause of the existing famine. His admonition is accompanied by promises of Divine assistance.

ii. *The Second Prophecy* (Chap. 2^{1-9}).

This was delivered on the twenty-first day of the seventh month. The work of reconstruction being begun, the prophecy consists of a further promise of Yahweh's help, and contains a rebuke to those who disparaged the new building in favour of the old.

iii. *The Third Prophecy* (Chap. 2^{10-19}).

This is dated the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month. It is an answer to doubts that have been expressed as to whether the completion of the Temple will bring about the promised national prosperity.

iv. *The Fourth Prophecy* (Chap. 2^{20-23}).

This is an address to Zerubbabel, assuring him of Yahweh's personal favour and protection. It was delivered the same day as the third prophecy.

The Second Temple.

When Cyrus issued his famous decree authorizing the Jewish exiles to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the

Temple, which Nebuchadrezzar had left in ruins, only a small number appear to have taken advantage of the opportunity. These may have sincerely attempted to carry out the command of Cyrus, but it is evident that they found the difficulties too great for them. The hostility of the surrounding peoples, their own lack of funds, and their scanty numbers, all made it impossible to carry through their great task, and they had to content themselves with the lesser work of restoring the altar of burnt-offering.

Cyrus died in 529 B.C. During the reign of his successor Cambyses (529–522) the times were still unpropitious, and the rebuilding of the Temple was not begun in earnest until the accession of Darius Hystaspis. In the second year of his reign (520 B.C.) the foundations of the new Temple were laid. To Zerubbabel, who had been appointed governor, and to Joshua the high priest, there came the word of the Lord through the prophet Haggai: "Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord" (Hag. 1^8).

The building of the Second Temple was completed in March 516 B.C., in the sixth year of the reign of Darius. The ground plan of Solomon's Temple seems to have been followed, and the dimensions of the new Temple were the same as those of its predecessor.

But the glory of the Second Temple was not to be compared with that of the First. The new building was "the work of a smaller and poorer people, without commerce, threatened by many adversaries, and with

the walls of their city still in ruin." It had nothing of the magnificence of Solomon's Temple, and it was probably because of this that "the old men that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice" (Ezra 3^{12}).

The Holy of Holies in Solomon's Temple had held the sacred ark, but the ark no longer existed; its place was taken, in Zerubbabel's Temple, by a stone three finger-breadths high, on which the High Priest laid the censer on the Day of Atonement. In the Holy Place, separated by a curtain from the inner sanctuary, stood the table of shewbread. Instead of the ten candlesticks in the former Temple, the Holy Place was illuminated by a golden lampstand with seven branches. In the court before the sanctuary stood the altar, which was no longer of brass but of undressed stones, and was approached by a sloping ascent instead of steps.

The Second Temple was further distinguished from that of Solomon by having two courts, an outer and an inner, in accordance with Ezekiel's plan. But the laity had, in this case, access to both the courts. And this right evidently still belonged to them in the time of Alexander Jannæus; for it is said that while he was sacrificing at the altar on the Feast of Tabernacles he did something which offended the people, and the worshippers pelted him with palm branches and citrons. As a consequence of this treatment Alexander had a wooden fence built round the altar, and the people were henceforth excluded from the inner court and altar.

From the time of Zerubbabel to the time of Antiochus

Epiphanes the Temple stood unharmed. But in 168 B.C. Antiochus robbed the building of its golden lampstand, table of shewbread, and golden altar. Three years later, after the reconquest of the city, Judas the Maccabee replaced the sacred furnishings and dedicated the Temple anew. In 63 B.C. Pompey captured Jerusalem, but left the Temple unspoiled. Nine years later, however, the city was taken by Crassus, who mercilessly plundered the sacred building. Through these varying fortunes the Temple still survived until it was replaced by the more ambitious structure erected by Herod the Great.

NOTES.

Hag. 2^2 "*Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah.*"—Shealtiel was the son of Jeconiah (Jehoiachin), the king of Judah, who was taken captive to Babylon (2 Kings 24^{15}), so that Zerubbabel was in the direct line of descent from David. Judah was a Persian province at the time of Haggai, and was ruled by a governor appointed by the Persians.

Hag. 2^2 "*Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest.*"—Jehozadak was taken to Babylon by the Chaldeans (1 Chron. 6^{15}). He was the grandson of the high priest Seraiah, who was put to death by Nebuchadrezzar after the capture of Jerusalem 586 B.C. (2 Kings $25^{18.21}$). Joshua was the first high priest after the restoration.

ZECHARIAH.

The Prophecy of Zechariah.

Contemporaneously with Haggai appeared the prophet Zechariah, with similar views and with the same aims.

His book, therefore, has the same subject as that of Haggai, namely, the rebuilding of the Temple and the future Messianic kingdom of Zerubbabel.

Of the prophet himself little is known. He describes himself as the son of Berechia, the son of Iddo, while a tradition, regarded as reliable, states that he lived to a great age and was buried near to Haggai in the priests' place of sepulture.

The Book of Zechariah is an important link in the transition from prophetical to apocalyptic literature. In this respect the prophet is unique, for he abandoned the old style of utterance and clothed his ideas, instead, in the language of symbolism, a change regarded to-day as indubitable proof that prophecy was degenerating into a purely literary creation, and that the thought of a direct and personal influence had totally disappeared. The older prophets, it is argued, felt themselves to be one with God and in direct personal intercourse with Him. The later prophets, on the other hand, regarded Him, instead, as more transcendent and so far above man as to require an angel to act as intermediary in any revelation He had to impart. Zechariah's book, therefore, is a witness of this growing deterioration.

Thus, though the purpose of Zechariah's prophecy was identical with that of Haggai, the method which he adopted to cope with the trials and difficulties was totally different. Haggai began with invective and remonstrance; Zechariah had recourse to symbolism and clothed his message in a series of eight visions, all of which were apparently borne upon him in one night,

that of the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month of the second year of Darius, 520 B.C. Yet the one ambition dominated both—the desire to see the triumph of Yahweh's Kingdom practically demonstrated in the completion of the Temple, and in the re-establishment of the old Theocracy, of which Zerubbabel would be the temporal head.

The latter hope was the outcome of the political unrest in the Persian Empire, the Jews in Babylon actually sending a golden crown to Jerusalem to be worn by Zerubbabel as the future Messiah-King. But these anticipations were doomed to disappointment. The Persian State stood firm under the strong hand of Darius, and the longed-for independence of Judah remained a dream.

NOTE.

Zech. 8^{19} "*The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts.*"—On the ninth day of the fourth month, a breach was made in the walls of Jerusalem, Zedekiah and his men of war fled, and the Chaldeans entered the city (2 Kings 25^{3-5}, Jer. 52^{6-8}); on the tenth day of the fifth month the city, palace, and temple were burnt (Jer. $52^{12, 13}$); in the seventh month, the governor, Gedaliah, was murdered; on the tenth day of the tenth month (a year and a half before the day on which the breach in the walls was made) the siege of Jerusalem began (2 Kings 25^{1}, Jer. 52^{4}).

MALACHI.

The Book of Malachi.

The Book of Malachi closes the canon of the Minor Prophets, and is therefore spoken of by the Jews as "The Seal of the Prophets." Of the author nothing is known. It is even probable that the name is a *nom de plume*, since the word Malachi means "angel" or "messenger," and no patronymic or birthplace is given, an unusual omission. The Targum ascribed the authorship of this prophecy to Ezra, an opinion accepted by Jerome but rejected by modern scholars.

The character of the book points to a period shortly after the time of Nehemiah, when the Temple services had been resumed. It was a period of many ecclesiastical and moral abuses. The priesthood became lax and degenerate; there were numerous marriages with foreign women; the payment of tithes was not punctually observed; the Temple services were not properly kept up; a spirit of carelessness and indifference prevailed widely among the people; offerings were made of cheap or blemished sacrifices; while "sorcerers," "adulterers," and "false swearers" were common. Amongst the better classes there were exhibited the vices of injustice and extortion. Men did not scruple to withhold the wages of their servants; divorces were abnormally prevalent; the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow were unduly oppressed. And in consequence of the troubles and social wrongs which they saw about

them, there arose a party who, though observing the outward forms of religion, were deficient in spirituality, and a prey to sceptical thoughts, doubting whether Yahweh had any real "love" for Israel, and arguing that it was vain to serve Him, since the righteous appeared to have no advantage over the wicked.

The prophecy of Malachi was written as a protest against these evils. It is not a collection of oracles uttered on several occasions like most of the other Prophetical Books; it forms a continuous composition prepared probably for publication rather than for oral delivery.

Its method and style are very characteristic, the most striking feature being the discussion of a subject by questions and answers, a dialectic method which became famous at the hands of Socrates.

It is addressed to an age of discontent and disaffection. The people had begun to doubt the fact of Yahweh's peculiar love for them, for the looked-for change in their condition had not taken place, and the optimistic forecasts of the prophets had not been fulfilled. God, they argued, had abandoned them and broken His promise. The Gentile world was still pre-eminent, and the Persian grasp as tight as ever. So disappointment and bitterness filled the minds of the devout Jews of Malachi's day, and his book was therefore written as a justification of Yahweh and a protest against these impious views.

The prophet points out that God's persistent restoration of Israel to their national existence need only be compared with the fate of the Edomites (their blood

relatives) to be in itself a demonstration of the Divine favour towards them (1^{5}).

He shows that the delay in fulfilling the long hoped-for destiny of Judah was dependent upon their own moral turpitude, not upon the Divine tardiness; and because the people will not admit this to be so, he writes scathing indictments of their conduct, especially in regard to their degradation of the Temple service. Better, he cries, to close the Temple than offer to Yahweh the contemptible sacrifices which are daily brought (1^{12-14}), or sustain its services with a corrupt priesthood (2^{1-9}). Such disregard for their religion is the cause of their moral degeneracy, and he challenges the people to make the experiment of a contrasted course of conduct and then see what a wealth of blessing it would bring. "Return unto me," he writes, "and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. But ye say, Wherein shall we return? Will a man rob God? Yet ye rob me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with the curse; for ye rob me, even this whole nation. Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. . . . And all nations shall call you happy; for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts" (Mal. 3^{7-12}).

NOTE.

Mal. 4[5] "*Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet.*"—The general Jewish view was, and still is, that Elijah is to be the forerunner of the Messiah, especially for the sake of bringing peace, settling disputes, and deciding who by birth are entitled to belong to Israel. At the Passover the door is left open for Elijah's entrance, and at circumcisions a seat is left vacant for him. The Jews also have a saying, "Put it away till Elijah comes."

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